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Iraq's Post-war Failure:  
A Result of Special Interests

By

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Of the Requirements For  
Honors in the Department of Political Science

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## ABSTRACT

BUTLER, GORDON                      Iraq's Post-war Failure: A Result of Special Interests

ADVISOR: Professor Clifford Brown

This thesis explores the causation for entrance and failure of the American intervention in Iraq. While it is commonly understood that President Bush's insistence on preventing further atrocities after September 11<sup>th</sup> was a major motivation for launching the war, there exist many more players hidden from the public eye that contributed to the decision. Collaborating as collected special interests, these individuals often manipulated the public agenda, bent factual evidence to their favor, and sold the war to an ignorant American public. As a result, proper planning for post-war reconstruction and the assurance of stable democratic growth after the fall of Saddam was supplanted by a biased effort to launch a quick public war. Without a proper plan to serve as the foundation for a successful operation, little was achieved after Saddam was removed from power.

Research for this thesis was collected from a plethora of primary and secondary sources. The thesis itself is broken up into chronological chapters. Within each chapter are sections that address a particular special interest and its involvement in the stage of the war being discussed. Section order runs parallel in each chapter for increased readability. This thesis sheds light on a dynamic of foreign policy in which the motivations for action must be stringently monitored and, without fear of political whiplash, be denied by representatives until proven absolutely necessary.

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## **Introduction**

Although much has been written about the recent War in Iraq, very little investigating has been done on a large-scale to pinpoint the major causes of failure in the post-war phase of the operation. Perhaps because the events are so fresh or because such investigation would uncover a larger disintegration of the superiority of the American system, none have attempted to apply as much effort into revealing the reasons for failure as was expended upon launching the war eight years ago. While much of the information that would aid in painting a picture of what exactly went wrong will remain classified or otherwise unavailable for years to come, until then it is extremely important to examine the issue to prevent further such failures. If a deterioration of the American system has occurred, which will in fact be argued, post-war Iraq must be used as an example of how not to continue to widen the already large fissure in national supremacy.

What is clear about the War in Iraq is that the call to action after September 11<sup>th</sup> was followed immediately by a massive effort to sell the war to the public through exaggerated and sometimes fabricated pieces of intelligence painting Iraq as an imminent threat to American lives. This was coupled with an unbalanced planning phase, which stressed the actual invasion over what would occur after. As the media was constantly barraging citizens with stories about the imminent dangers of an Iraqi nuclear program, the confirmed presence of other weapons of mass destruction, the country's ties to terrorist cells, and the urgent call for preemptive action, the administration was hard at work constructing an invasion that would break Saddam's regime with as little effort as possible. In reality, the resulting graceful military victory over the forces of the Iraqi military was only the prologue to the larger story of a poorly planned, horribly executed,

corrupt, and ultimately damaging attempt to convert a distraught war torn nation into a democratic beacon in the Middle East. The real question then, is why wasn't more energy spent ensuring the completion of a bulletproof post-invasion plan that would accomplish the goals that the administration had propped up as those worthy of sacrificing American lives?

The answer is exposed while investigating a group of special interests within the Bush administration whose individual motivations for going to war with Iraq collectively removed emphasis from the importance of obtaining a steadfast post-war plan. Instead, their objectives pertained to the results of the military victory and removal of Iraq's dictator. Through his removal, individuals such as the neoconservatives would accomplish their goal of creating a less threatening environment for their allies in Israel, while others such as Donald Rumsfeld would achieve victory through the use of a much lighter and faster military force ushering in a new age of American combat. The mutual understanding of the importance of a successful invasion led to a collaborative push for quick action against Iraq after a shortened planning period, which sacrificed the strength of a post-war plan in order to use the limited time available to stamp out a workable military strategy. Because none of the interests involved had goals heavily invested in a smooth post-war period, little thought was given to what was required in order to stabilize a leaderless Iraq after the fall of the current regime. Of course, given the little effort put into plan, the environment immediately following the invasion was a chaotic scene with little direction towards improvement.

The post-war period, however, cannot be understood without first examining the context during the pre-war period and the decision making that took place prior to

America's intervention in Iraq. By examining secondary, and when necessary, primary sources, a better understanding of the decision making process as well as the reasoning behind the failure of post-war Iraq can be achieved. First off, what exactly the numerous interest were and their complexities must be explained. Although they were unified under the flag of intervention in Iraq, each special interest had its own specific goals. The distinctions between them can be used to pinpoint their individual affects on different aspects of Iraqi operations. How the American public was sold into a war with Iraq was a topic extensively covered in the aftermath of the war. However, a breakdown of what each specific interest contributed to the effort can supply a new perspective on how America bought into launching a preventive war. The planning process that resulted from the recognized need to remove Saddam Hussein from power will reveal the foundations of a war effort that was less than prepared for what it set out to accomplish. Much of what took place, or did not take place after the invasion was on account of what occurred during this time period. The various special interests played major roles in this process. Finally, a detailed explanation of the events immediately following the invasion will conclude the description of the special interest's impact on post-war Iraq. Such a chronological investigation will best expose the reasoning behind Americas biggest foreign policy blunder of the new millennium.

## **Chapter 1**

### **Alliances of Interest and Their Additions to the Case for Entering the War in Iraq**

The opening salvos of the Iraq War fired on the morning of March 19, 2003 by the United States were the culmination of a shared vision between numerous high-ranking government officials and the supporters of their underling ideologies. This vision not only included the toppling of Saddam Hussein's oppressive regime, which the government had been containing since the end of the Gulf War, but also the dawn of a new era in foreign policy where the spreading of democracy, overhauling the philosophies of the defense program, amassing private wealth in the name of national security, and seeking the completion of many other unique objectives would become the norm. Although these interests vary, Iraq provided the common ground for mixed ideologies to come together and realize the collective benefits of intervention. Indeed, removing Saddam from power made the world a safer place for America, democracy, and the dictator's enemies, but with the hindsight of justification for war on shaky ground, namely the lack of WMDs and no discovered ties between Saddam and 9/11, one must question if those in power actually believed these falsehoods, or used them as opportunistic ammunition to commence a campaign on behalf of other interests. It is the purpose of this chapter to examine these various interests and showcase their overlap.

### **George W. Bush-Continuing American Dominance through Preemption**

President George W. Bush was elected under the pretense that his foreign policy would be a drastic shift from that of the previous Commander and Chief, Bill Clinton. Under his administration, Clinton had militarily intervened in Yugoslavia, Haiti, Africa,



Sudan, Iraq, and others, which, according to Bush had overextended the military in unnecessary operations of nation building. The would-be president proposed a move from this multilateral involvement during a televised debate on October 11: “I would be very careful about using our troops as nation builders. I believe the role of the military is to fight and win war and therefore prevent war from happening in the first place” (Ricks, 25). Certainly from this and other speeches during the campaign, it appeared as though Bush and Cheney would opt to significantly reduce the use of armed forces in the implementation of foreign policy unless as a “preemptive” measure to guard against a known threat of war. What the administration did however in the near future was use the military in a “preventive” fashion to in order to protect America from perceived threats. Although similar in name, these two types of action have distinct differences that will be analyzed later in order to understand Bush’s motives for invading Iraq. But first what facilitated the change in Bush’s agenda, namely the death of close to 3,000 innocent Americans on September 11, 2001, should be understood.

Before 19 al-Qaeda terrorist hijackers used airplanes as weapons against the Pentagon and the World Trade Towers, the Bush policy towards Iraq had been one of containment. Specifically:

The aim of the U.S. government, generally in its words and certainly in its actions, was containment of Iraq: ringing Saddam Hussein with military forces, building up ground facilities in Kuwait, running intelligence operations in Kurdish areas, fling warplanes over much of his territory, and periodically pummeling Iraqi military and intelligence facilities with missiles and bombs (Ricks, 12).

This strategy that had been used since the conclusion of the first Gulf War was an expensive attempt to keep a menacing dictator in check without a full-fledged military incursion. For Bush, Saddam Hussein represented not only a potential threat to American,

but also a threat to his family. Specifically, in 1993 when his father visited Kuwait in order to celebrate American victory of Desert Storm two years earlier, an attempt was made on his life that was later claimed by the FBI to have been planned by the Iraqi Intelligence Service. Whether or not the younger Bush held a personal grudge against the dictator for making such an attempt is open for debate. Publicly, however, George W. addressed the event in a neutral manner. In an interview before he was inaugurated, a reporter asked if Iraq had “bedeviled” his father and the administration. Bush replied, “I wouldn’t say it bedeviled the past Bush administration. I think the past Bush administration dealt with it very firmly and left a regime place that isolated Saddam” (Alfonsi, 378). However, after 9/11 when the now President George W. Bush was confronted with a wounded nation attacked by violent radicals, a great sense of urgency to prevent future attacks from taking place began to eat away at his pre-election policy promises.

In fact, the night of September 11, Bush “ordered his NSC counterterrorism chief Richard Clarke: “See if Saddam did this. See if he’s linked in any way” (Alfonsi, 385). Having witnessed the destruction that Saddam was capable of in the massacre 300,000 of his own citizens with the use of chemical weapons, and the known budgeted programs for the development of further biological and nuclear weapons, Bush did not want to wait for another unexpected attack to take place during his presidency and certainly seemed to initially expect the attack to have been masterminded by those close to Saddam. Because of the focus that was on Iraq before September 11, many in Bush’s administration wished to see it involved in the “first act” of his response to the attacks regardless of the presence of a link between Saddam and the event. However, when no link was found the opinions

of those individuals had to take a back seat to Bush's objectives. Nevertheless, "after Bush's initial decision not to attack Iraq immediately following the September 11 terrorist attacks, the issue had continued to percolate in the war cabinet" (Woodward, 2002, 329). In the months following 9/11, Bush had made it extremely clear to his personnel that the opportunity provided by the attack on American soil would not be used for a "photo-op war" like one that would result from launching an offensive in Iraq. Instead Bush wished to satisfy the American public's desire to seek revenge with "a realistic scorecard and a list of thugs that could be targeted" (Woodward, 2002, 49). In an interview one week after the attacks in New York, Bush declared: "We have an opportunity to restructure the world toward freedom, and we have to get it right" (Jervis, 369). With the start of the Afghan invasion a success and the media flooded with images of destroyed terrorist camps, fleeing extremists, and updated enemy casualty counts, Bush achieved his goal of obtaining revenge for the American public. This initial necessary success behind him, Bush was able to set his sights on further implementing his doctrine on targets of interest, namely Saddam's Iraq.

Described by Robert Jervis as having four distinct parts, the Bush Doctrine can be noted as Bush's ideological response to the threats after 9/11:

A strong belief in the importance of a states domestic regime in determining its foreign policy and the related judgment that this is an opportune time to transform international politics; most notably preventive war; a willingness to act unilaterally when necessary and, as both a cause and a summary of these beliefs, an overriding sense that peace and stability require the United States to assert its primacy in world politics (Jervis, 366).

Each part is uniquely tied to the others, but it is important to note that the use of preventive war, mentioned earlier, is what carries the most weight in this doctrine.

Different from preemptive war, which aims to neutralize a pending attack, preventive war is launched in order to thwart a threat that does not exist yet, but is assumed to appear in the future. In the case of Iraq, there were no known imminent threats to American security before 9/11 beyond the fears of future WMD possession, and the situation remained the same immediately following the event. However, the event did have a remarkable effect on those in the White House, summed up by Donald Rumsfeld, “we did not act in Iraq because dramatic new evidence of Iraq’s pursuit of weapons of mass murder. We acted because we saw existing evidence in a new light, through the prism of our experience on September 11” (Jervis, 372). No longer would the United States find it acceptable to shrug off threats based on the assumption that it is an invincible nation. Having suffered a massive loss at the hands of only a few individuals, no future perceived danger would be taken lightly.

As a result, Bush felt that the policy of containment in Iraq that was being carried out during the campaign in Afghanistan had become obsolete. Illustrated by his Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice: “If anyone willing to wait is wrong, then we wake up in two or three years Saddam has a nuclear weapon and is brandishing it in the most volatile region in the world”(Woodward, 2002, 350). Rice was famous for saying, “we don’t want the smoking gun to be a mushroom cloud”, continuing to proliferate Bush’s new policy of prevention. In a speech given to Cadets at West Point in 2002, Bush himself laid out his new strategy that is an obvious exodus from the strategies that these students of the academy had been studying in the classroom: “We must take the battle to the enemy, disrupt his plans, and confront the worst threats before they emerge” (Ricks, 38). Never before had America set for itself the task of preventing war before it started. Such a

mission would require the constant multilateral upkeep of threats domestically, and abroad. As a result, “the \$48 billion addition to the Pentagon budget requested by the Bush administration in January 2002 by itself was more money than any other country spent on its military-and that was on top of the existing \$379 billion military budget” (Bennis, 83). Ironically, not only was Bush setting himself up to do exactly what he criticized Clinton for doing during his administration, namely overusing the military, but he did it on an even larger scale than ever before.

It is clear that Bush’s agenda changed considerably after 9/11. Worth questioning is whether or not Bush would have invaded Iraq if it were not for the day’s attacks. Regardless of the answer, Bush’s doctrine reflects one that is focused on recovering and retaining world supremacy: “...the preventive war doctrine is based on strength and on the associated desire to ensure the maintenance of American dominance” (Jervis, 370). This desire of Bush contains an ideology similar to his father’s “new world order”, which he laid out in a speech on ironically, September 11, 1990. Calling for among other things a Soviet-U.S. alliance and Soviet integration into the world economy, the elder Bush’s speech preached of a commitment to American strength as a world superpower for the guarantee of peace. Presently interpreted by the younger Bush, a post 9/11 new world order would include the disarming of all potential threats to American preeminence.

For this reason Saddam Hussein, who at the time was suspected to possess weapons of mass destruction was a textbook target. “One of the consequences of the Bush administration’s reliance on Iraq’s weapons program as a rationale for going to war, though, was that the administration could not afford to abandon this rationale under any circumstances...” (Alfonsi, 397). A great amount of effort on behalf of those close to

Bush was put into convincing the public and intelligence officials that Saddam was actually a threat deserved of a second war. Therefore, any pullback in support from this reasoning they had chosen, would bring with it degradation to the administration's reputation. Bush became in essence, increasingly a prisoner of his own plan as a lack of evidence tying Saddam to WMDs became apparent. As a result it became standard procedure to doctor available intelligence to fit the needs of the set agenda for invading Iraq. Greg Thielmann, the State Department proliferation expert, on the administration:

They were cherry-picking the information that we provided to use whatever pieces of it that fit their overall interpretation. Worse than that, they were dropping qualifiers and distorting some of the information that we provided to make it seem even more alarmist and dangerous than the information that we were giving them. (Ricks, 55).

When this doctored information was released to the public, the obvious reaction was of support for intervention in Iraq. Bush was not able to save the decision-making reputation of his administration however, as months later invading forces uncovered absolutely no evidence of WMDs in Saddam's Iraq and the public erupted with protest about the justifications for initial intervention.

### **The Neoconservatives-A Desire to Spread Democracy or Protect Israel?**

It is fair to say that the bulk of Americans today have no interest in policing the world. However, the Bush doctrine as described aims to prevent violence from occurring on United States soil, and therefore requires the multilateral implementation of military force that can be perceived to be an attempt to act as a world police. Although the public may disagree with this policy, those in government who are known as the neoconservatives recognized that September 11<sup>th</sup> and Bush's ideological response

provided the perfect opportunity for the implementation of their own agenda in the Middle East and for the future of American foreign policy. Conveniently, when Bush was elected in 2000, he brought into his administration ten of the twenty-five founding members of the neoconservative think tank, Project for a New American Century including Dick Cheney, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Lewis Libby, and others (Record, 22). Although some of these characters had additional unique interests concerning Iraq, which will be discussed later, collectively their neoconservative ideology greatly influenced the foreign and domestic policy of the United States during the Bush years. Their goals in Iraq, with historic roots dating back to the post-Cold War arena, are clearly visible in the guidelines of the Bush doctrine, illustrating their success in infiltrating the decision-making apparatus of the president's administration.

These goals, however, cannot be understood without comprehending the underlying principles that neocons submit to. Francis Fukuyama lays them out in his book America at the Crossroads: Democracy, Power, and the Neoconservative Legacy, as “the view that the nature of regime matters to external behavior...As the world's dominant power, the United States had special responsibilities in the realm of security, ...that international law is too weak to enforce rules and restrain aggression” (Fukuyama, 48-49). When you combine these three principles, it is instantly intuitive that neocons feel an obligation to use force and nation-building rather than diplomacy to secure the world. An ideal neocon world is a democratic world “because democracies do not fight each other” (Record, 18). The neocons saw opportunity in Iraq to establish a democracy through which they could spread the ideology to neighboring states that they felt threatened the safety of America and the world.

Using Iraq as a catalyst for a domino effect in transforming the potentially threatening regimes of the Middle East into democracies was a goal of the neocons that pushed America to war and is worthy of investigation. Believing that democracy in Iraq would in turn “provide the peoples of the region a powerful and ultimately irresistible alternative to the failed regimes of the so-called moderate Arab states and the Islamists’ totalitarian vision of the future,” intervention in the country was a necessary step (Record, 70). Unhappy with many of the regimes in the area, including American allies such as Saudi Arabia and Egypt, which the neocons site as incubating extremist views of individuals such as Osama Bin Laden, they wish to reshape the Middle East in its entirety into a bastion of democracy. This goal became a possibility after 9/11 when Bush, enamored by American security, was easily influenced by the promises of this neocon objective. Responding to the obvious shift in policy from the time he was elected until after 9/11, in 2004 presidential candidate Howard Dean even went as far as saying about the president, “the Bush administration had been captured by neoconservatives” (Fukuyama, 12). Nevertheless, the neocon goal to use Iraq as the igniter for unleashing a wave of democracy over the Middle East is not a new concept. East and Central Asia, Latin America, and Eastern Europe were all “benefactors” in the view of the neoconservatives, of American facilitation towards sweeping democratic regime change during the 80’s and 90’s.

The extent to which the neoconservatives felt that Iraq, like these other countries before it, presented the best opportunity for continuing their policy of regime change can be seen in the book The War over Iraq: Saddam's Tyranny and America's Mission. Written by Lawrence Kaplan and William Kristol, who have extensively defended the



neoconservative ideology in their works, the book outlines the various avenues of justification for American intervention in Iraq including,

Iraq could even replace Saudi Arabia as the key American ally...in the region. A democratic Iraq would also encourage the region's already liberalizing regimes— such as those in Qatar, Morocco and Jordan— to continue on their paths toward democracy...Arguing exactly this point, Vice President Cheney predicts that when Saddam falls, “the freedom-loving peoples of the region will have a chance to promote the values that can bring lasting peace.” (Kaplan and Kristol, 192).

With hindsight it is easy to see that Cheney was mistaken in the seemingly effortlessness of post-invasion democratic proliferation. However, at the start of the war the neocons could not have been more confident in their goal of Middle Eastern regime change. Although the neocons were strong in their belief of the effects intervention would have on Iraq and its neighbors, individuals separated from the neoconservative ideology had very different thoughts on the matter. James Dobbins, who is the Director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the RAND Corporation and who was also Assistant Secretary of State under Clinton and the first Bush, writing for the journal *Foreign Affairs*, felt that the neoconservatives were over optimistic in their expectations of a democratic Iraq:

Democratization is no panacea for terrorism and no shortcut to a more pro-U.S. (or pro-Israel) Middle East. ...Furthermore, democratic governments in Egypt, Jordan, or Saudi Arabia would be more hostile to Israel and less aligned with the United States than the authoritarian regimes they replaced, since public opinion in those countries is more opposed to Israeli and U.S. policy than are their current leaders (Dobbins, 72).

Such opinions were not enough to curb the long held assumptions of powerful neoconservatives, however. For over a decade, powerful individuals holding the ideology had considered the supposed benefits of intervening in Iraq.

Written in 1992 by then Pentagon analysts and hard-line neoconservatives Paul Wolfowitz and Lewis Libby at the request of then Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, a document called “Defense Guidance” has come to chillingly resemble the Bush administration’s justification for invading Saddam’s Iraq and illustrates the second neoconservative aspiration in Iraq worthy of examination, namely establishing the balance of power in America’s favor. The document’s main thesis was that it is necessary for the United States to place itself atop the world in terms of military supremacy by preventing any challenging threats from developing. “In the original draft of this document, the idea of preventive war against states developing weapons of mass destruction was adumbrated” (Grondin, 232). In their view, even before 9/11 and the war on terror, the only way that American democracy could be safe was to go on the offensive against any and all threatening powers, including all those that had even the slightest potential to become challenging, and replace their regimes with democracies. In addition to securing peaceful democracies in place of these threatening regimes, such action would secure America as the top power in the relevant region and prevent it from having the appearance of weakness. “Hence there was a great deal of willingness, on the neoconservatives’ part, to associate their project with images of a “new Rome”” (Grondin, 238). Neocon academics blame the conflicts of the past on the unwillingness of historic leaders to utilize the military to the extent that would be necessary for the upkeep of American hegemony. With Iraq specifically, the neocons in the Bush administration hoped to rewrite the wrongs of history by placing America atop the power spectrum in the Middle East and removing the main threat of Saddam Hussein.

Why the previous Bush administration had not removed Saddam initially, according to the neocon ideology is on account of a “realpolitik” view of foreign policy. Under this view, foreign policy is conducted with a narrow view of American interests. In other words, it was in America’s best interest to remove Saddam from Kuwait, but the administration’s vision was too narrow to comprehend the fate that awaited victims inside of Iraq at the hands of the ruthless dictator. In addition, the neocons viewed the Clinton Administration’s policy as having “embraced a kind of wishful liberalism that, in the case of Iraq, meant following the lead of the United Nations, employing American power fitfully and apologetically, often ignoring Saddam’s challenges...” (Kaplan and Kristol, 76). In the place of these two failed views, namely realism and liberalism, the neocons wished to establish an American internationalism that would establish the United States as the unilateral power of the world. The events of September 11<sup>th</sup> then, “did not so much cause neoconservative views on world order to change, as it provided the context for implementing what had already been conceived” (Grondlin, 235). America would now act alone on its own interests across the globe unapologetically, and free from the limits of any international institution to secure its top place in the balance of power.

“Acting”, as mentioned above, is a fairly ambiguous term. However, the neocons define it in another one of their goals that is a compliment to those already mentioned, namely the willingness to use force. America has the biggest and most well funded military in the world. However, neocons view the ways in which it is often employed as half-hearted and rueful:

The Vietnam War and subsequent U.S. uses of force adversely affected America’s strategic reputation, encouraging enemies, including Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, to believe that the United States was a “sawdust superpower,” a state whose military might vastly exceed its will

to use it. The United States was defeated in Vietnam, run out of Lebanon and Somalia, and by the time of its Balkan interventions, so casualty-phobic that it placed the safety of its military forces above the missions they were assigned to accomplish (Record, 68).

In the neocon mind, America should not be so bashful to use its military in order to accomplish its goals of national security, securing the balance of power, etc. As a result, neocons thought that use of force in Iraq was almost a necessity. Where there is a threat, which there was perceived to be in Saddam Hussein's regime, the military must be used to neutralize it without hesitation. It should be evident that the other goals of the neocons described earlier all rest on the ability to use force decisively, and failure to do so would signal the crippling of the neoconservative agenda.

A continuation of the use of force can be found in the final goal of the neoconservatives that will be analyzed, that of protecting Israel's interests. Because it is considered to be taboo by some, this goal is one that is often left out of public debate on behalf of the fear that is caused by being potentially labeled an anti-Semite. However, the presence of strong Jewish following and external Israeli support is evidence enough that American interests alone do not influence neoconservative decision-making. The term "neoconservative" itself has roots in Jewish history. Namely, during the 1960's when the American presidency was inhabited by democrats who supported lowering the importance of the military in foreign policy and were increasingly concerned with third world causes, Jewish immigrants and those who supported Israel grew tired of the lack of policy that would ensure Israeli security, causing them to shift their views right towards a more hard-line conservative ideology.

Many liberal Democrats...espoused cutbacks in the development and procurement of weapons systems, a curtailment of American military capabilities and commitments, and what amounted to a semi-return to

isolationism. These policies all appeared to represent a mortal threat to Israel and, hence, were opposed by many Jews who support Israel.  
(Sniegowski, 32).

Those who opposed these liberal Democrats, who will now be referred to as neocons, finally found right wing refuge in the administration of Ronald Reagan whose assertive policies on the use of force and anti-communism softened their fears about Israeli security.

Gal Beckerman a reporter for the Jewish newspaper entitled *Forward* wrote in January 2006: “if there is an intellectual movement in America to whose invention Jews can lay sole claim, neoconservatism is it” (Sniegowski, 26). While retaining their liberal stance supporting the welfare state, neoconservatives got their name from their foreign policy, which was a far cry from the reservist tendencies of the left. Rightist evolutionary biologist Kevin MacDonald who has done much work on the concept of Jewishness writes:

...the ethnic agenda of neoconservatism can also be seen in their promotion of the idea that the United States should pursue a highly interventionist foreign policy aimed at global democracy and the interests of Israel rather than aimed at the specific national interests of the United States” (Sniegowski, 43).

Such an opinion lends one to question the Americanized justifications for war with Iraq that neoconservative officials within the administration were so vigorous to deliver. In fact, it can be argued that arguments made for spreading democracy in the name of American security should be relabeled as indeed for the security of Israel. This Jewish interventionist policy can be seen while examining the roots of American foreign policy in the Middle East in recent history that eventually led to the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

After the overthrow of the American placed Shah of Iran in 1979, the United States viewed revolutionary Shiite Islam as a direct threat to its interests in the Middle East. Therefore, a shift in support from radical Iran to its bordering enemy, Iraq, was an easy decision. The following year when Saddam launched a war against its neighbor, the United States provided support as it saw an opportunity to use Iraq as a proxy in order to contain the extremist Islam that caused the fall of the Shah. This support came in the form of basic supplies, intelligence, and also included allowing Iraq to purchase from American companies “poisonous chemicals, including strains of anthrax and bubonic plague...” At the same time, Israel “was selling war materials to Iran” due to the fact that those in the Israeli government viewed Iran as being much less of a threat with a greater geographic distance from the homeland than Iraq (Sniegowski, 61-62). It was not until Saddam invaded Kuwait and reports surfaced of the horrific atrocities taking place there that the first Bush administration shifted its views to run parallel to Israel’s on Iraq and forcefully removed Saddam’s forces from Kuwait.

Although the first Bush administration did not fulfill the desire of the neocons to remove Saddam from power in order to prevent him from attacking Israel in the future, they leant their support to Bill Clinton’s strategy of containment as it at least promised to keep the threatening Iraq at bay. It was not until George W. Bush was elected and the prominent neoconservative and former Reagan Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Paul Wolfowitz was appointed as the U.S. Deputy Secretary of Defense that the neocon agenda of supporting Israel in the Middle East came to complete fruition. For his efforts, “Wolfowitz was designated as ‘Man of the Year’ by the pro-Likud *Jerusalem Post* for the Jewish year 5763, which consisted of the period between

October 2002 and October 2003” (Sniegoski, 118). This recognition came as a result of his efforts to secure the Middle East by fixating on the threat of Iraq from the very start of his duties as Deputy Secretary long before the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>. In April of 2001 Wolfowitz insisted, “The real threat was state-sponsored terrorism orchestrated by Saddam,” despite no evidence of such a relationship ever being uncovered (Sniegoski, 124). Accordingly, it was his belief that containment was an immoral tactic for dealing with Iraq, similar to containing Hitler in Nazi Germany. Wolfowitz would make this actual comparison numerous times as he himself lost almost his entire Polish family in the Holocaust, bringing his private motivations into question.

Wolfowitz’s personal commitment to Israel comes from a lifetime of connection with the Jewish Homeland. Coming from a family of Jewish Polish immigrants, some of his immediate family lives in Israel while Wolfowitz himself lived there with his committed Zionist father as a boy. This lifelong dedication to Israel led Wolfowitz to become a founding member of the Project for the New American Century, mentioned earlier, receive a distinguished service award from the Jewish Institute of National Security Affairs, and sign a variety of letters sent to presidents encouraging intervention in the Middle East in the name of defending Israel. Finally, working in the Administration of George W. Bush, Wolfowitz could use his influence along with the influence of his neocon peers to ensure the security of Israel by invading Iraq.

Neoconservative influence in the decision to invade Iraq is clear and evident. Similarly, so is the neoconservative tie to Israeli interests. Because there are many Jewish neocons, and because Israel is a strategic launching point for the proliferation of democracy, much effort goes into shaping American foreign policy for the benefit of the

Jewish homeland. In the case for Iraq, even those inside the Bush administration admit that entangled interests induced American involvement. “Philip Zelikow, who served on the President’s Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board...publicly acknowledge that the Iraqi threat was primarily against Israel, not the United States...” (Sniegowski, 18).

Individuals in the United States interested in Israeli security recognized the need to eradicate Saddam’s army to avoid potential bloodshed. Although September 11<sup>th</sup> is a day that is looked back with grief, it also signaled the total alignment of American and Israeli interests as their enemies in the Middle East became one and the same.

### **Donald Rumsfeld-Micromanaging a “New Aged’ War**

Paul Wolfowitz may have had an influence on the decision to invade Iraq, but it was ultimately his boss, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld who would shoulder more responsibility for persuading the president to make the decision. Rumsfeld’s interests in Iraq were not tied to foreign interests like Wolfowitz, or the result of adopting a preventive strategy like Bush. Instead, it can be argued that Rumsfeld, perceiving devastating weaknesses in the military bureaucracy, formulated a new system of administration and seeking a place to test his new arrangements, exaggerated the case that Iraq was a deadly threat after September 11<sup>th</sup> in order to launch a real-time assessment.

From the very onset of his tenure as Defense Secretary, Rumsfeld was very clear to his staff at the Pentagon that his objective was to make the military a more efficient lethal force capable of great feats with limited numbers. For example, a day after Bush’s inauguration Rumsfeld called a meeting of strictly civilian employees where he laid out his plan for transformation. Military leaders, who he perceived to be the root of the



problem, were completely absent from the room. A secretary with such an ideology was an easy choice for the younger Bush who had displayed a congruency with Rumsfeld's views during a speech at the Citadel in 1999 when he said, "Our military is still organized more for Cold war threats than challenges of the century-for industrial age operations, rather than information battles" (Herspring, 22). With an ideological understanding between them, the Secretary was given full power to accomplish his goals.

As Rumsfeld saw it at the start of Bush's presidency, the Pentagon and the rest of the military apparatus was a slow moving ineffective conglomeration of "old" minds that did not have the capacity to shift with the times. "'Rumsfeld doesn't hate the Army', said a civilian Pentagon official... 'He is frustrated with tendencies he sees in the Army to be impervious to change'" (Ricks, 68). Having witnessed the military success of the Gulf War and entranced by a new wave of highly advanced military technological innovations, Rumsfeld saw a future for the military that was compact and extremely sophisticated. "Technology made the need to rely on massive armies-so much a part of the past-irrelevant. In the future, the armed forces would rely 'on high-technology weapons systems rather than on soldiers'" (Herspring, 18). The obstacles in Rumsfeld's way on his quest to reform the military according to his vision included the Pentagon bureaucracy, and those individuals who operated with the perceived "old school" mindset.

Particularly, Rumsfeld identified the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Hugh Shelton, as an enemy of his reform and attempted to reduce his power.

The new defense secretary complained that the Joint Staff was too large and recommended that it be reduced by dispensing with Shelton's office of legislative affairs and his office of public affairs. Shelton stood his ground, arguing that the JCS chairman, by law, was the principal military adviser to the president and the National Security Council as well as the secretary of defense and that he needed a staff to support those

responsibilities...Rumsfeld approached defense like a businessman who saw himself on top of a steep pyramid (Gordon and Trainor, 7).

In other words, Rumsfeld attempted to shorten the distance between his orders and their implementation by removing those in the chain of command who had the power to convolute them. In this manner Rumsfeld could act as the literal CEO of the American military and have a hand in every aspect of implementation. Rumsfeld felt so strongly about the weaknesses of the military bureaucracy that a day before the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks he said in a Pentagon speech:

‘From a single capital, it attempts to impose its demands across time zones, continents, oceans and beyond. With brutal consistency, it stifles free thought and crushes new ideas. It disrupts the defense of the United States and places the lives of men and women in uniform at risk... You may think I’m describing one of the last decrepit dictators of the world. But their day, too, is almost past, and they cannot match the strength and size of this adversary. The adversary’s closer to home. It’s the Pentagon bureaucracy’ (Gordon, Trainor, 9).

Prior to 9/11, Rumsfeld was intently focused on dramatically revising the American military, as is clear from the emphasis he placed on the danger it was threatening our soldiers with. What is less clear, however, is why the Secretary felt this way.

The frustrations that Rumsfeld had with the military bureaucracy can be explained by the limitations of a multiple sovereign model. In such a model, explained by Gordon Tullock in his book The Politics of Bureaucracy, an aspiring politician, in this case an employee of the Pentagon, wishing to advance must approach his work in ways that are inefficient to the overall goal of the organization. In a bureaucracy such as the Pentagon, the number of higher officials presents endless possibilities for the development of differentiating opinions about policy implementation. In this way there is a lot of work that is done, but little that is produced. With many employees striving to satisfy the

differing opinions of their superiors, little can be accomplished. “To advance the politician must secure the favor of one or more of the higher sovereigns. The ambitious politician, confronting multiple sovereigns, will try to form a connection with one or more of these superiors” (Tullock, 101). Instead of striving for the common goal, individuals are left striving to satisfy their superiors, leaving the organization’s goal on the backburner.

For Rumsfeld, the operation of the military bureaucracy under this multiple sovereign model was so dangerously inefficient he may have felt a great need to rearrange it in the more efficient single sovereign model with himself at the top in the name of national security. According to Tullock, “the single sovereign relationship is the most efficient administrative arrangement” (Tullock, 78). Instead of orders traveling through a long line of subordinates, Rumsfeld envisioned a military bureaucracy in which he ran every aspect from his office in Washington D.C. No longer would the implementation of policy be sluggish on account of the chain of command. All orders would come from the top, and the top alone, facilitating quick response capabilities, which in some cases could save lives. “Rumsfeld believed the Joint Staff-and everyone else in the Pentagon-worked for him. He accused the Joint Staff of specializing ‘in thick studies that took months or more, didn’t cut to the essential issues and were basically unreadable.’ He dismissed them as just a group of people spinning their wheels” (Herspring, 14). Naturally, Rumsfeld received much resistance from military brass who saw a lightening quick change in the implementation process as an unnecessary shift to a working model whose efficiency could be increased just as easily through gradual modification. “The relationship between Rumsfeld and the army would get so bad that by 2002 army officers referred to Rumsfeld and his aides as ‘the enemy’”. (Herspring, 32). However, the tragic events of 9/11 a year

earlier would provide Rumsfeld with a share of relief from the lamentations of the established military elite as they crumpled under the pressure of patriotic allegiance.

At a time when Rumsfeld's efforts to transform the military were raising serious questions amongst top brass, the terrorist attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center helped cement the secretary's positive reputation in the public spotlight as an official who was serious about national security. At the beginning of every presidency congress launches a Quadrennial Defense Review, or QDR, which assesses the strengths and weaknesses of America's military. Even before 9/11 Rumsfeld had personally inputted into the review a recommendation for the creation of a Pentagon Office of Force Transformation which would supervise the military makeover and whose director would report directly to him. Because the report was released immediately following 9/11, Rumsfeld was able to execute the recommendations of the review with ease, despite the objections of military officials. The military had no choice now but to adhere to the congressionally sanctioned review, and go along with Rumsfeld's vision of transformation.

Aiding in the completion of Rumsfeld's vision was his plan for the invasion of Afghanistan which provided the first proving ground for his new style of military implementation. Stewing since the early 90's, Rumsfeld was now able to test out the developing concept of "network centric warfare", or NCW for short, which encapsulated his love for high tech weaponry and low reliance on human forces.

Network-centric warfare can be a confusing concept. But the goal was to confuse and disorient an enemy, so that his ability to conduct military operations quickly disintegrates. Indeed, the concept could be summarized as: Shock and awe are achieved not simply as a function of the number of targets destroyed, but as a result of the destruction or neutralization of

significant numbers of critical targets within a short period of time and/or the successful targeting of the right target at the right time (Herspring, 26).

After battling with top military commanders to scrap the Crusader artillery program, which represented a continuation of old fashioned military technology, Rumsfeld used the \$9 billion that that the program had been allocated to stockpile new weapons systems including precision guided missiles, Stryker vehicles capable of high speed troop transport, and the famous Future Combat System that would all support technologically driven warfare. The FCS in laymen's terms is a logistical network that "will develop the capacity to rapidly project a dominant ground force everywhere in the world within days"(Herspring, 55). In other words, the secretary was putting his money where his mouth was by cutting lagging expensive development programs and replacing them with pragmatic purchases that fit his military vision.

After results from initial combat in Afghanistan reached Washington, Rumsfeld believed that the ejection of the Taliban "had been a triumphant vindication of all his argument for transformation" (Cockburn, 2007, 130). The apparent success of the operation sparked Rumsfeld to desire a "round two" where he could continue to prop up the case for the expanded makeover of the military. As already shown, Iraq had been a hot topic since the start of the administration and provided a great setting for Rumsfeld's second proving ground. According to the secretary,

It was important to topple the Taliban as quickly as the U.S. could, but that would not be enough. The United States needed to do more to demonstrate that there were serious consequences for mounting an attack on the U.S. and to show it would not suffer unsavory governments that were affiliated with terrorists...Rumsfeld was advocating a demonstration of American power (Gordon, Trainor, 19).

It was more so American power fueled by the “modern” military, which he had led the transformation of that Rumsfeld was pushing to demonstrate. What made Iraq such a perfect target for Rumsfeld was not only that an invasion already had the backing of many members of the Bush administration including the neocons and Bush himself, but also because it was perceived by the secretary’s Pentagon experts to be an extremely weak regime. Their recommendation for invasion had initially been “special forces with air support, maybe just ten thousand or fifteen thousand troops” (Cockburn, 2007, 153). What better way to prove the effectiveness of military technology and limited use of ground forces then on a regime that could be easily defeated by such few men?

Rumsfeld cared little about what took place after an Iraq invasion. “His main concern was that American forces should not remain to put down roots as part of some Clinton-style nation-building exercise, as had happened in the Balkans” (Cockburn, 2007, 170). Accordingly during the planning of the invasion, the secretary was in a constant battle to drive troop numbers down, which military commanders knew would be a disaster for any post-war maintenance. Rumsfeld would get his way, which added significantly to the deterioration of conditions on the ground after the invasion, but would in theory verify the effectiveness of his military transformation.

For his part, Rumsfeld maintained that the war showed the path to victory was not through overwhelming force, as had been the case in the 1991 Gulf War. Mass, in the form of troops and weapons systems, was no longer the key to victory. There were only 100,000 American troops on the ground when Baghdad fell (Herspring, 58).

The many problems that this policy of limited ground forces had will be investigated later, but it is important now to note that it was Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld who had

successfully altered the implementation of military policy and continued to modify the long standing military bureaucracy despite his obvious lack of military experience.

### **Dick Cheney-The Corporate Interest**

The drastic changes that took place as a result of Rumsfeld's work would facilitate one of the most noteworthy occurrences in modern warfare, namely the extensive use of corporations on the battlefield. Although it may appear that Rumsfeld was the main driver of using these corporations through his extensive efforts to furnish America's modern military with the newest technological innovations, it was actually Vice President Dick Cheney who had the most connections to, and biggest influences over their use in Iraq. As the ex-CEO of Halliburton, one of the worlds largest oil-field services corporations, and its subsidiary Kellogg-Brown & Root a logistics and military contractor, Cheney was plugged into a network of business interests whom he could easily acquire reconstruction and security contracts for during wartime through his position as vice president. He sat at the forefront of a developing industry that profited off of American foreign policy funded by taxpayer money. Therefore, the allure of waging a continuous war, like the one president Bush declared against terrorism after the events of 9/11, may have come directly from the limitless potential for corporate profiteering.

Cheney's connection to corporate interests is rooted in his historical commitment to privatizing the battlefield. As Secretary of Defense under the first President Bush, Cheney became impressed by the work that Halliburton had carried out after American forces had expelled Saddam Hussein from Kuwait. The company had been employed to repair damaged oil fields as well as pipelines to insure continued supply of the precious

commodity. In order to increase the efficiency of a similar conflict in the future for other aspects of war, the then secretary “asked private contractors to bid on a \$3.9 million contract to develop a classified report demonstrating how a private firm could provide logistical support to the army in case of further military action” (Briody, 184). The winner of the contract, Kellogg-Brown & Root, a subsidiary of Halliburton, produced a report that showed that it was possible for a single company to provide vertical logistical support in the form of base construction, water purification, transport, supply services, etc, in a number of wartime situations. For their efforts, the same company was awarded the largest running private contract to date called “the Logistics Civil Augmentation Program, which has been used in every American deployment since its awarding in 1992” (Briody, 185). By securing this contract, KBR and Halliburton now looked at Cheney as their man on the inside, someone who could potentially continue to supply them with lucrative contracts come significant developments in foreign policy.

As a result in 1995, Halliburton appointed Cheney, who had absolutely no previous business experience, as their CEO. Despite the apparent pitfall of having no previously acquired industry knowledge, over the next five years Cheney’s company billed the government over \$2 billion in services (Briody, 199). Payment to the company was received on a cost-plus basis in which the more money the company spent on its operations, the more money it was paid as a percentage. The revenue brought in by Cheney transformed Halliburton into a corporate powerhouse with an impressive bottom line, and indeed Cheney himself into a very wealthy man. During his tenure, Halliburton was involved in Azerbaijan, Iran, Libya, Angola, Nigeria, Egypt, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and many more countries using his Washington influences to shape Halliburton



into the top government contractor in America, driving up its stock price 157%. None of it would have been possible if it weren't for the transfer of many Washington officials onto the board of directors at Halliburton. Such a move enabled the company to leverage its vast network of government contacts to produce profitable business opportunities.

By the time Cheney was appointed Vice President, “contractors had become an institutional part of the battlefield. As the Clinton administration’s tenure in office drew to a close, contractors were called in even to take part in war game exercises...” (Chatterjee, 64). Therefore, the push for war after 9/11 must have seemed to Cheney and his corporate contacts as an eternal ring in the coffer. Holding the second highest position in the government of the most powerful country in the world, Cheney appeared to corporate interests as the gatekeeper to limitless profit potential. As some noted in Washington, “We elected a government contractor as Vice President” (Charles Lewis, *Why We Fight*). Cheney would very quickly vindicate the suspicions of such individuals as contractors close to Cheney carried out the building of cells in Guantanamo, bases in Bagram and Kandahar, and the continuation of the previously mentioned LOGCAP program.

Holding such a high office, it is up for debate whether or not Cheney’s connection to the corporate world was a conflict of interest in terms of launching the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, and indeed whether or not the Vice President used his connections to advance corporate contacts. Explained by Pentagon insider, retired Lieutenant Colonel Karen Kwiatkowski,

‘You do have to follow the money. If you follow the money here, its not so much that Halliburton wanted a war so they told Dick Cheney to go get one for them. It wasn’t that. But what you do get is a willingness to go to

war. You get a willingness to look at the cost-benefit scenario' (Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski U.S. Dept. of Defense (ret.), *Why We Fight*)

What the Lieutenant Colonel is implying is that Cheney may have weighed the monetary benefits of going to war with the obvious downsides of the deaths of thousands of American soldiers. To the average American with no ties to corporate interests, such a trade seems unbalanced with the absence of a net benefit. For Cheney and his corporate connections, however, the profit potential unquestionably would make up for any loss in life.

One aspect of this profit potential not yet mentioned was derived from the Iraqi oil supply, which in itself was a great draw to intervention in the region. According to Stephen Pelletière, a retired CIA Senior Political Analyst, in his book America's Oil Wars,

The policy makers in Washington had been wrestling with the problem of how to hang on in the Gulf...Once Iraq was occupied the problem of finding a base in the area would be resolved: the base would be Iraq...With an Iraqi puppet government set up, the Americans could hope to dominate OPEC...They could also wield extraordinary influence over oil-starved countries such as Japan and Germany, who get the bulk of their supplies from the Gulf (Pelletière, 134).

Although Pelletière is speculating, it provides an interesting logical viewpoint of what went on behind closed doors from an industry insider. Regardless of what actually went on, Iraq's vast oil reserves added to the invasion scenario a new variable that Cheney's pocketed corporations had the means to handle. Specifically, Operation Restore Iraqi Oil, or RIO, was a contract designed to secure the oil supply of Iraq immediacy following a successful invasion. The plan included solutions to multiple problems such as if Saddam set fields ablaze, and how to repair their notoriously deteriorating condition upon acquisition. Having handled oil fires during the first Gulf War, Halliburton was handed

the contract without a competitive bidding process. The fact that there were multiple companies at the time including Halliburton's competitor Dyncorp, that were capable of handling the RIO contract is a testament to the influence that the company and its ex-CEO Cheney may have had on the distribution process. Thus even before a public announcement was made for the invasion, Halliburton was already brandishing a lucrative no-bid contract that ensured its continued dominance over the contracting market.

Halliburton, however, was not the only corporation that benefited from the hailstorm of business potential after the events of 9/11 facilitated the beating of war drums by the American public. For every corporation looking to get involved there was a board of directors filled with ex-government officials who had the connections to lock up contracts.

‘We have a snapshot in time after September 11, whereat least 71 companies that we were able to identify are starting to get contracts to go in to Afghanistan and Iraq. All of the top ten companies had former U.S. officials who had worked in the pentagon or other parts of the U.S. government on their boards of directors or executives. Its known as the ‘revolving door’’ (Charles Lewis, Center for Public Integrity, *Why We Fight*).

Among the most notorious of these companies was Blackwater, a rising force in the private security industry whose CEO Erik Prince was quick to take advantage of the post 9/11 exploding \$100 billion private contracting industry. Already involved in the training of American law enforcement and military personnel before the attacks, Blackwater would burst into a private army, continuing to train vast numbers of government employees, but also supplying their own forces in the form of security guards, vehicles, weapons, and support troops. The company was the perfect answer to those in the

administration, such as Rumsfeld, who were moving quickly in their quest to staff the invasion of Afghanistan, and eventually Iraq, but wished to keep American troop numbers at a minimum. Armed with training not available to standard military men, Blackwater's forces and the services it provided to existing soldiers, supplied the outsourcing necessary for operations to run perceivably smoother.

The company hit its pinnacle of operations when it was given the contract to protect Paul Bremer, the American diplomat responsible for conducting post-invasion reconstruction. Before this pinnacle and even before 9/11, as discussed, Blackwater was already doing a hefty load of contracting for the government. Having carried out numerous contracts previously with the CIA, FBI, and various other organizations, Blackwater executives, many of whom were ex government officials themselves, were already on a first name basis with those in Washington who had the power to utilize the company through the handing out of contracts. Jamie Smith, an ex CIA operative and Blackwater employee involved in initial missions to both Iraq and Afghanistan noted:

‘Once you get your foot in the door with a government outfit that has offices in countries all over the world, its like-and this is probably a horrible analogy-but its something maybe like the metastasis of a cancer, you now, once you get into the bloodstream you’re going to be all over the body in just a couple of days, you know what I mean? So if you get in that pipeline, then everywhere that they’ve got a problem and an office, there’s and opportunity’ (Scahill, 46-47).

For every government officials capable of enacting leverage on the handing out of contracts, there was a lucrative job waiting in the private sector at various contracting firms. Similar to Halliburton, Blackwater was part of the nationwide “revolving door” where businessmen and politicians were interchangeable as part of a profit making apparatus involving government and its contracts. This system was noted by those in

Washington who recognized that at the time that “the corporate interests that stand to benefit are so intertwined and so interwoven with the political forces that the financial elites and the political elites have become the same people” (Chalres Lewis, *Why We Fight*). With much profit to be made by so many individuals and corporations, the agenda to intervene in Iraq was set. Corporate interests left it up to their man on the inside, Cheney to convince the American public that Iraq was a serious threat to the United States. Absent in his case for action, however, was emphasis on the anticipated extensive use of private contractors, which represented the most dramatic shift in modern combat of the century.

### **Ahmed Chalabi-The Shady Pawn**

What the previously mentioned interests had in common was the need for evidence in order to convince the rest of America that the invasion of Iraq was worth the time, money, and loss of life. Their answer came in the form of an Iraqi exile named Ahmed Chalabi who appeared to be able to provide the necessary substantiation from Iraqi defectors that Saddam was indeed in possession of WMDs, and had the capacity to produce more. Chalabi’s organization, the Iraqi National Congress, was a child of the CIA started to create opposition groups within Iraqi borders in hopes of causing Saddam’s upheaval without direct intervention after the Iran-Iraq War. It was supposed to set up propaganda stations from which the masses of Iraq could be turned against Saddam. Unfortunately, many working close to the operation in the CIA found Chalabi and the work of the INC to be “trash” on account of it providing no intelligence while on the payroll and making no progress in winning the hearts of the Iraqi people (Miller, 10).

Audits revealed unnecessarily lavish spending and the disappearance of millions of dollars, causing a collapse in the relationship between the CIA and the congress.

Where the CIA left off, however, individuals like Wolfowitz, Cheney, and Rumsfeld picked Chalabi back up as heavy supporters of the removal of Saddam who were swayed by his charm and intense opposition to the dictator. With the help of these diplomats and his continued lobbying during the late 90's, Chalabi's victory came in the form of the Iraq Liberation Act that Clinton signed in 1998, securing America's dedication to regime change in Iraq and almost \$100 million in direct aid to the INC. Although funding was delayed by those in the State Department who distrusted Chalabi, the election of George W. Bush brought with it access to these funds. The increase in funds did not bode well for Chalabi's reputation amongst the intelligence community, which still viewed him as a fraud and not to be trusted.

Nevertheless, after September 11<sup>th</sup>, America's desire to seek revenge against its enemies overrode its willingness to adequately investigate the sources of information it was using to develop responsive foreign policy. "The intelligence community...had no agents sending reliable reports from inside Iraq. That left a vacuum- and gave Chalabi an opening that he exploited adeptly" (Ricks, 57). Immediately following the terrorist events, Chalabi became a household name at the White House as he advised the administration about the possibilities of action in Iraq. Despite the fact that "the State Department thought he was a master manipulator with little constituency in Iraq", those in the administration with aspirations about intervention in Iraq could not be more pleased with his testimony. What he painted for officials was an Iraq that provided a significant threat to the United States, but that could easily be toppled by the proper

alignment of tactical force and internal uprising. It was true that Saddam's "army had tanks and helicopters and WMD, but he could be toppled but Iraqi insurgents with U.S. airpower. The uprising would turn Iraq into a good, stable, modern, pro-Western free market country" (Gordon, Trainor, 18). For those looking to convince the president that Iraq would be a great second stage to wage the war against terrorism after initial success in Afghanistan, Chalabi was a gold mine of convincing information. Going beyond presenting the case of Saddam's vulnerability, Chalabi provided an apparently foolproof plan for post-invasion operations.

Chalabi's idea was to establish a sanctuary in southern Iraq among Shia and around the southern airfields. Once the U.S. military could secure this area, Chalabi supporters and other Iraqis would have a safe haven to "defect" to. In Chalabi's pitch, he asserted that Iraqis would swarm to such a safe haven (Duelfer, 211).

The information that Chalabi provided was coming through Iraqi defectors found, interviewed, and harbored by the INC. The most famous of which, codenamed "curveball" was later found to be the brother of one of Chalabi's top aids and had supplied much of the false evidence used in official testimony by government officials as justification for launching the war on Iraq. "According to multiple sources, Chalabi's Iraqi National Congress sent a steady stream of misleading and often faked intelligence reports into U.S. intelligence channels" (Miller, 11). In an interview on PBS's *Frontline*, Chalabi himself said he would create the appearance of credible information by first giving curveball's information to the media, and then to the U.S. government. When the two entities would cross reference each other and have the same information, an assumption of accuracy would be made (Ricks, 56). False information about biological

weapons, terrorist training camps, drone planes, etc, was revealed in this manner, all making the case for going into Iraq seem much more justifiable.

For Chalabi, the motivation for supplying incorrect information was the possibility to gain a high position in the post-invasion Iraqi governmental structure. With much trust already confided in the leader of the INC, government officials were relying on him to follow through on his promises of leading an Iraqi uprising to help in transitioning from the regime of Saddam to an American-friendly framework. Chalabi and his team of Iraqi exiles ushered themselves into reconstruction planning by being the sources from which the Bush Administration extracted its case for war. Unfortunately, as is known, Chalabi's hopes of increasing his power disappeared just as quickly as America's hope for establishing a concrete democracy in Iraq.

The alliances of interest that made up the case for launching an American war with Iraq are both expansive and unique. They range from the desires of Bush to enact a new policy of preemption to the potential monetary motivations of Dick Cheney and his corporate rolodex. Others discussed previously include the interests of Rumsfeld in testing his new policies on waging war, the neoconservatives including Wolfowitz whose attention was focused on protecting Israel and spreading democracy throughout the Middle East, and Chalabi with his gang of exiles who wished to attain a grasp on post invasion power. While each had their own particular interests, their significance comes from the alignment that took place between them, which enabled them to work together to make a case for entering Iraq. Not all individuals within the administration, however, were so keen on the invasion of Iraq. From their posts within the military, cabinet, and elsewhere, dissenters expressed their grievances with a loud and steady voice. What



exactly they were saying, and why their unified voice did not deter the invasion is a valuable investigation.

## Chapter 2

### The Other Side of the Coin: The Dissent

Although it may seem that support for America's intervention in Iraq received limitless support from those in Washington, there were individuals within the Bush administration itself who adamantly opposed the invasion. Included in the opposition were Colin Powell, retired four-star General, ex National Security Advisor, ex Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Secretary of State under George W. Bush; Brent Scowcroft, National Security Advisor to Ford and the elder Bush, retired Lieutenant General in the Air Force, Military Assistant to Nixon, and George W. Bush's Chairman of the Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board; and finally, Norman Schwarzkopf, retired Army General, and Commander of U.S. Central Command during the 1991 Gulf War. Although there are others, these three are solid representatives of the "realist" agenda that combated that of the neoconservatives and their allies. With the credentials of those previously mentioned and with the accuracy of hindsight, it is plain to see that many in the administration should have listened more closely to what these realists had to say:

So-called Republican realists, no fans of the neoconservatives, were alarmed by the shift they saw in the administration's posture. This group, which included many veterans of the first Bush administration, saw Colin Powell as its primary ally inside the government. Scowcroft, national security advisor to the first president Bush, staked out the realist position on CBS' *Face the Nation*, where he warned that a U.S. invasion of Iraq: 'could turn the whole region into a cauldron, and thus destroy the war on terrorism' (Ricks, 47).

As the eldest of the three realists, Scowcroft had the most to offer the administration in terms of historical perspective. Having aided Washington through Vietnam, perhaps he saw America entering another war it would come to regret.

### **Brent Scowcroft-The Logical Realist**

According to Scowcroft himself, “Vietnam was visceral in the American people. That was a really bitter period, and it turned us against foreign-policy adventures deeply, and it was not until the Gulf War that we were able to come out of that” (Jeffrey Goldberg, *The New Yorker*). Because of his experience, Scowcroft was extremely sensitive to what he considered to be misuses of American power. Similar to Henry Kissinger, whose policies as Nixon’s national security advisor he helped implement, Scowcroft’s realist approach caused him to throw his undying support behind the first Gulf War in order to remove Saddam from Kuwait, but withdrawal support when officials began demanding his removal from power. Scowcroft believed the First Bush administration had weighed its options correctly as “it was anxious to avoid any steps that would depend the United States’ involvement on the ground or risk the breakup of a nation that had served as a buffer against the expansion of Iranian power” (Gordon, Trainor, 12). Although Scowcroft would get his way with the first Bush because of the excellent relationship the two had formed based on parallel ideologies, his fears of American intervention would come to fruition under George W. It appears that the recommendations made by Scowcroft and the first Bush in the co-authored presidential memoir, A World Transformed about the need to adhere to a realist foreign policy were not heard by the latter’s son, leading the nation into the long struggle in Iraq.

When many American diplomats seemed to be clouded by the post 9/11 rush to revenge, Scowcroft seemed able to stand apart from the uproar and look at the big picture through the pragmatic lens that his realist ideology provided him. About Iraq he said, “There is scant evidence to tie Saddam to terrorist organizations, and even less to the

September 11 attacks. Indeed, Saddam's goals have little in common with the terrorists who threaten us, and there is little incentive for him to make common cause with them" (Woodward, 2004, 159). Unlike the neocons who took the diminutive evidence of WMD's such as the aluminum tubes and hydraulic dump trucks found in Iraq, as serious threats that called for war, Scowcroft insisted that their link to the production of threatening weapons was completely erroneous. Although he agreed that intervention in Afghanistan was a necessary response to the terrorist attacks, he also failed to see the justification for stripping Saddam of his power. In weighing the positives and negatives Scowcroft commented, "A military campaign very likely would have to be followed by a large-scale, long-term military occupation" (Ricks, 47). Scowcroft was hinting that such an endeavor would be unfavorable for American interests for its potential to require a vast amount of time and resources for an end that would not necessarily be beneficial to the United States in the long run.

Responding mainly to his neoconservative peers within the administration, Scowcroft felt that the desire to spread democracy throughout the Middle East was an endangering prospect.

'The reason I part with the neocons is that I don't think in any reasonable time frame the objective of democratizing the Middle East can be successful. If you can do it, fine, but I don't you think you can, and in the process of trying to do it you can make the Middle East a lot worse.' He added, 'I'm a realist in the sense that I'm a cynic about human nature' (Jeffrey Goldberg, *The New Yorker*).

In order to make his case more apparent, Scowcroft teamed up with James Baker, the Secretary of State under the first Bush, to write a paper outlining what the two agreed to be the fundamental flaws of the younger Bush's foreign policy. Within the paper, behind suggestions like replacing leadership positions within the Department of Defense,

Scowcroft's realist pragmatism is apparent, begging for a return to a foreign policy framework based on achievable goals. Such attempts were futile as the administration marched towards war. Scowcroft, however, was not alone in doubting this forward momentum through previous experience.

### **Colin Powell-The Apprehensive Soldier**

One administration official who not only supported the realist agenda pushed forth by Scowcroft, but was also seen as one of its leaders, as mentioned earlier, was Colin Powell. The two were in very similar situations having formed excellent working relationships with the elder Bush, but then finding themselves diabolically opposed to the policies of his son's administration, felt like outcasts in their respective positions. As Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Gulf War, Powell created a doctrine of overwhelming force only when absolutely necessary, making a clean cut when the objective was accomplished (Gordon, Trainor, 11). For this reason he was dubbed the "reluctant warrior" and looked down upon by the neocons in Washington who viewed him as an obstacle to spreading democracy with military force (Woodward, 2004, 151). Derived from his experience in Vietnam which he viewed as a tumultuous era led by unorganized and incompetent individuals, Powell, similarly to Scowcroft, was one official who was committed to learning from the mistakes of the past. Therefore, after 9/11 Powell found himself fighting an uphill battle against those in the administration lacking a similar understanding.

It is a common theme amidst the analysis of the Iraq war to see those who were involved in the Vietnam conflict oppose the policies of those who were, for one reason or

another, absent from participation. Powell's case is no different. Having been on the battlefield, and even been injured during combat by a Vietcong booby trap, it is no mystery where the four-star General turned Secretary of State's nickname came from. Unlike officials who had no combat experience and no real sense of attachment to Vietnam, Powell felt obligated to prevent another group of young men from suffering the same fate.

‘Many of my generation, the career captains, majors, lieutenant colonels seasoned in that war, vowed that when our turn came to call the shots, we would not quietly acquiesce in half-hearted warfare for half-baked reasons the American people could not understand or support’ (Alfonsi, 326).

In Iraq, Powell did not see evidence of a clear necessity to use overwhelming force to remove Saddam from Power. Although he was surely an atrocious dictator whose country was no model for a successful state, intervention for his removal would come at a severe cost of lives and resources and only result in the destabilization of American foreign policy. Powell's arguments against action would be reiterated to President Bush on numerous occasions, but the grasp that the neocons, Cheney, and other individuals committed to the war effort held on his decision making process were too great for the secretary to battle.

Even before 9/11 Powell had been a top supporter of economic sanctions against Iraq. When he heard the war drums being beaten by his peers, the secretary increased emphasis on the need to exhaust all diplomatic options, such as these sanctions and perhaps handing the problem of Saddam over to the U.N. before turning to full-scale invasion. “If you take it to the U.N. you’ve got to recognize that they might be able to solve it. In which case there’s no war. That could mean a solution that is not as clean as just going in and taking the guy out” (Woodward, 2004, 151). Powell was not clouded by

ulterior motives, which Cheney, his corporate interests, and the neoconservatives seemed to possess. Instead all that Powell had were past experiences and an excellent eye for pragmatic policy in determining the proper course for America.

As a starting point for opposing a war, Powell signaled to the geographical undermining potential that such action would have: “War could destabilize friendly regimes in Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan”, he said. “It could divert energy from almost everything else, not just the war on terrorism, and dramatically affect the supply and price of oil” (Woodward, 2004, 150). The Secretary was not certain that intervention on behalf of removing a dictator was worth consequences it would have on Middle Eastern relations. In addition, unlike many in the administration who had their sets sight exclusively on the invasion and not the aftermath, Powell had the foresight to advise Bush about what the poster-invasion scenario would entail. Specifically he said, ““you are going to be the proud owner of 25 million people. You will own all their hopes, aspirations and problems. You’ll own it all.” Privately, Powell called this the Pottery Barn rule; You break it you own it” (Woodward, 2004, 151). Unfortunately, despite his greater efforts, Bush sided with Powell’s ideological opponents in directing a course towards war.

The secretary’s failure to convince the president of the drastic consequences of invasion can in part be blamed on the poor relationship that the two had, which some administration officials noted as an “uncomfortable” one (Woodward, 2004, 79). Nevertheless, sensing this personal failure, Powell, like an excellent soldier, threw himself behind the views of the administration leading his country, acting in the manner that his Commander and Chief desired of him. In February of 2003 during a presentation

in front of the United Nations Security Council, Powell would attempt to convince the world that Saddam did indeed possess deadly weapons and that his removal was a top priority for global security. It is unfortunate that Powell's soldier instincts caused him to support his superior despite personal feelings, but what is truly regrettable is that after his resignation in late 2004, a supremely pragmatic and experienced voice was removed from the White House.

Despite his opinions while he was at the White House, it was Powell's duty and obligation to support the president in matters abroad. For the most part however, Rumsfeld shut out the cautious secretary's efforts as he scrambled to establish himself as the single official on military issues relating to Iraq. Powell's successor as well, Condoleezza Rice "was in the unenviable position of being asked to coordinate matters within the U.S. government at a time when Rumsfeld and his supporters were doing their best to cut agencies like the State Department 'out of action' (Herspring, 11). Despite the Defense Secretary's attempts to hack out the State Department, the work that the latter carried out on behalf of the administration nevertheless added to the momentum building for war. It came despite Powell's personal preference to side with the rest of those with military experience in the administration, as mentioned above.

What Powell and many in the State Department became then, were victims of their own administration, forced to carry out preparation for a plan they did not agree with out of fear of the consequences for not doing so. The department itself was heavily involved with the post-war planning aspect of the invasion while Rumsfeld and those in the Department of Defense burned their time up with military strategy. Although it will be talked about later in great detail, the planning was launched as the "Future of Iraq"



project. Its director, Thomas Warrick, although “considered to be in the antiwar camp...explained the importance of preparing for war by saying, ‘I’m nervous that they’re actually going to do it-and the day after they’ll turn to us and ask, ‘Now what?’” (Fallows, 53). On a more individual level, Powell’s February 2003 case before the United Nation’s Security Council, which was an attempt at showing the world the reality of a threat in Iraq turned out to be the deciding factor in his removal from office after evidence he gave about Iraq’s weapons programs turned out to be untrue and a prime example of the war momentum that the State Department was capable of gathering despite its absence from much of the invasion planning process.

### **General Schwarzkopf-Top Brass**

Although also removed from the White House, and indeed for the duration of the time that the Bush Administration held office, General Norman Schwarzkopf was still able to have his voice heard in the press and amongst administration officials. After their retirement, four-star generals are still very much involved in operational activities on account of their vast wealth of experience and their occasional status as independent consultants. It can be argued that in the post 9/11 Bush administration, the most influential retired general not employed by Washington was in fact Schwarzkopf. Having been in charge of the Central Command during the first Gulf war, while at the same time commanding the coalition forces on the ground, no other military man was more qualified to advise on the strategic and logistical intricacies of war in Iraq.

After Schwarzkopf had driven Saddam from Iraq, he noted in his memoir that,

‘We would have been considered occupying powers and therefore would have been responsible for all the costs of maintaining or restoring

government, education, and other services for the people of Iraq...We would have been like the dinosaur in the tar pit-we would still be there.’  
(Record, 4).

His concerns about a long drawn out occupation are similar to the other dissenting interests mentioned earlier. Therefore when rumblings amongst the retired general’s administration contacts began to point towards an Iraqi invasion, he wasted no time in making his opinion known. In the first place, Schwarzkopf did not deem the available evidence being used as justification for intervention a reasonable case for military action. “In January 2003 he made it clear in a lengthy interview that he hadn’t seen enough evidence to persuade him that his old comrades from twelve years earlier- Cheney, Powell, and Wolfowitz-were correct in moving toward a new war” (Ricks, 81). Although Schwarzkopf had campaigned with the Bush administration supporting the use of force when it was absolutely necessary for national security, in this case he did not buy into the available intelligence. He favored UN weapons inspectors continued perusal of Iraqi compounds but when nothing turned up, the call for war seemed like a faux pas.

Schwarzkopf’s standpoint was the same as many other veteran brass and those currently in the military who saw their roles being hijacked by officials who had no pertinent experience required for making well-informed decisions.

‘It’s scary, okay? Lets face it: There are guys at the Pentagon who have been involved in operational planning for their entire lives, okay?...And for this wisdom, acquired during may operations, wars, schools, for that just to be ignored, and in its place have somebody who doesn’t have any part of that training, is of concern’ (Ricks, 83).

A smooth operation could not be organized and implemented without the steady input from experienced individuals who the administration happened to be shutting out from discussions about the invasion. Accordingly, not only did Schwarzkopf believe that

entering Iraq was a mistake in the first place, but also that even after the invasion was being planned, those in power were doing a terrible job.

### **The CIA's Buildup to War-Creating an Obligatory Invasion**

While the invasion was being designed, the momentum gathered by the various interests in the buildup to the decision of war in Iraq was continued by the established bureaucracies as they committed more and more into pulling together a cohesive battle plan. More specifically, the effort, capital, manpower, etc that went into preparing a plan for the invasion of Iraq became so great at a certain point that a reversal of the policy of involvement would have been catastrophic to the administration's reputation as well as the international standing of the United States.

Intelligence organizations such as the CIA and the NSA added much energy to the momentum by heavily involving themselves before the call to war had even been given. Director Michael Hayden of the National Security Agency, for example, deployed his entire organization in preparation for action in Iraq months before any announcement of such action was made, citing that it would be impossible to accomplish the necessary work in the short time between establishing a political decision and an implementation of a plan. In a secret broadcast to all NSA employees on the organization's closed network television, Hayden said: "'A SIGINT agency can't wait for the political decision'. Although a formal decision to go to war with Iraq had not yet been made, every instinct and experience told him that war was coming. He had to move resources" (Woodward, 2004, 214). What this signaled was the initiation of an undisclosed amount of money and manpower into the intelligence apparatus, which, if the plug had been pulled on war in

Iraq, would have been a massive waste in spending. Fortunately, this NSA announcement was unknown to the public, a fact that would have saved the intelligence community much face if such an action were taken.

Similar to the NSA, the CIA significantly interwove itself within the planning process in a manner that would have made it difficult for a withdrawal of resources. In many foreign hostile encounters, the CIA had been employed to accomplish covertly what diplomacy and a full-scale invasion could not do, namely concealed regime change. In Iraq, toppling Saddam and replacing him with a democratically sympathetic leader was something the administration would have looked at fondly. However, the situation on the ground did not dictate the possibility of a smooth coup from within. “The CIA had to face the reality that Saddam, in power since 1979, had erected a nearly perfect security apparatus to protect himself and stop a coup....The only way to succeed was for the CIA to support a full military invasion of Iraq” (Woodward, 2004, 71). What this entailed was not only personnel support when the invasion actually began, but also in the meantime a “softening up” of the Iraqi war zone that would free up useful human assets, increase internal dissent, and break down Iraqi army efficiencies for a more effective eventual invasion. The exact plan for support came in the form of a secret order signed by President Bush which divvied out \$400 million over two years for intelligence operations in Iraq. The extent of the order:

Support opposition groups and individuals that want Saddam out, conduct sabotage operations inside Iraq, work with third countries such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia and support their covert intelligence operations, conduct information operations to distribute accurate information about the regime, run disinformation and deception operations to mislead Saddam and the regimes political, intelligence military, and security leadership, attack and disrupt regime revenues, banking and finances, disrupt the regimes illicit

procurement of material related to its military, especially its weapons of mass destruction programs (Woodward, 2004, 108).

With almost half a billion dollars invested before the invasion even began, this program added to the growing snowball of government spending that was being carried out on the assumption that war would take place in the near future. At what point in the pre-war involvement of the intelligence agencies did it become impossible to withdraw efforts is unknown. However what is known is that the United States has had a history of letting roll under the bus those who were involved in canceled operations.

During previous operations in the Middle East, agents used by the American intelligence organizations had long been victims of desertion. Groups such as the Kurds and the Shiites, for example, had previously enlisted themselves as sources of human intelligence close to the enemies of the United States within the Middle East, only to be abandoned when things went awry. In the build up to war with Iraq, these groups would no longer stand for such treatment. “Until they saw commitment on the part of the United States, they would not sign up” (Woodward, 2004, 64). What this added up to was the impossibility for carrying out intelligence operations in Iraq without the guaranteed backing of official United States policy. In essence, the CIA was required to promise American support in the form of an invasion before it knew whether or not such an act would actually take place. In addition to the monetary value that it was pumping into pre-announcement operations then, the intelligence community was also sacrificing intelligence assets. For organizations that after September 11<sup>th</sup> came under much scrutiny for letting the terrorist events of that tragic day take place, further operational farces would be a political death sentence. Accordingly, easing off efforts was an impossibility for the CIA after establishing human intelligence assets in Iraq.

### **Pre-War Planning-Additional Momentum for the Invasion Snowball**

In addition to the part played by the CIA, the massive planning that went into the invasion effort involving multiple branches of the armed services snowballed into an unstoppable force of bureaucratic production. Starting on November 21, 2001 at a National Security Council meeting, and extending to the launch of the invasion, the plan for Iraq required thousands of hours, an outlandish amount of money, and the full attention of America's top officials. So many resources were expended upon this endeavor that at some point it would have been logistically embarrassing to back out of such a costly undertaking. Certainly the interests discussed in the first chapter had absolutely no intention of backing out, and therefore were tolerant of the vast resources being consumed by the operation. Nevertheless, in a parallel circumstance where the justification for going to war was not centered around selfish interests and instead a rational condition, the termination of extensive planning would still run at a high cost. In March of 2002, a year before the invasion, Cheney went on a tour around the Middle East collecting allies for the America's upcoming war in "Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Jordan, Turkey, The United Arab Emirates, Egypt, and Israel", as well as stopping off in London to obtain a British blessing (Gordon and Trainor, 40). After such a public effort it would be politically awkward to withdraw the need for pledges of support for an invasion of Iraq. In addition, the anger aroused by Middle Eastern leaders for promising to allow American troops in Arab territory would have been for nothing. During the planning phase in early 2002, Bush administration officials held meetings at military bases around the Middle East including Central Command in Qatar, creating an armed presence that

would have to be followed by an invasion or else result in criticism of an unnecessary show of force.

As impressive as the international effort was, the battle within the administration to stamp out a bulletproof war plan was sucking the lifeblood out of the Bush White House. As factions formed at the lower levels about what direction the plan should take, those at the top continued to use up their valuable time in determining how exactly to accomplish their goal of toppling Saddam. “For more than a year, deliberations between Franks and Rumsfeld had focused in the main on what was needed for Phase III, the major combat operations that would take American forces to Baghdad” (Gordon and Trainor, 101). So uncomfortable did the situation get within the military bureaucracy as it clashed with the Pentagon and Rumsfeld’s office over the particulars of the invasion that a number of top officials ended up stepping down from their posts. Discussed later as one of the many reasons for the collapse of the post-war phase, this power vacuum made backing down from an invasion even more expensive as this loss of human capital would go unvindicated. At what stage, however, the administration reached a point of no return in planning for the invasion it is impossible to say.

The voices that formulated the dissent against going to war with Iraq were those of some of the most experienced and knowledgeable individuals within the Bush administration. Their opinions, doubts, and predictions about what the United States had to look forward to after Invading Iraq were based off of previous incidents of a similar fashion they participated in. Nevertheless, their attempts to overcome the snowballing effects of a few key collaborating interests were in vain. The resources of persuasion that these collaborators had at their disposable were limitless and included among them,

access to the national media, reframing of out-of-context intelligence, capitalizing on the patriotic response of 9/11, etc. To gain a better understanding of how the United States failed so miserably in its operations in Iraq, it will be necessary to examine how it got there in the first place. Having already examined the interests in play that were influential in the process, lets now turn to an examination of the process itself.



### **Chapter 3**

#### **Selling the War: Alliances of Interest and Their Marketing Campaign**

Because many of the interests discussed had for sometime considered ridding the world of Saddam Hussein one of their main priorities, the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 provided an opportunity for cooperation in using this atrocity to convince the world of going to war with Iraq. Although September 11<sup>th</sup> was the starting point, much else was required on behalf of these interests in terms of persuading the public that a war with another nation was necessary to respond to the type of viciousness displayed in New York City. Recognizing their shared interests, individuals and groups invested in going to war with Iraq came together, forming a massive collective effort that resembled a large-scale marketing campaign for a product about to hit the shelves. On paper, the product of war with Saddam's Iraq seemed like a hard sell with the target having no ties to terrorist organizations, no involvement with 9/11, and no proven possession of deadly weapons. Of course none of this was public knowledge at the time, and these interests were able to bend, alter, emphasize, and distort the available information to make a promising case to a significantly uniformed polity. By the end of their effort, these interests had amassed fervent support based upon carefully crafted evidence, much of which would later prove to be false. It is essential to examine how exactly these interests accomplished this feat while investigating their overall impact on the war with Iraq.

#### **Setting the Stage for Iraq-9/11 and Afghanistan**

On the morning of September 11, 2001, previous proponents of war with Iraq were handed the best piece of marketing ammunition possible by Islamic extremists bent

on destroying America. Although thousands had to meet their death in the process, the administration now had in its arsenal an emotional catalyst for hoarding support against America's enemies. With the proper application of effort, the pro-war camp could have launched an offensive against any force that presented even the slightest threat to America's interests. For an administration filled with individuals itching to get their hands on Saddam, the choice was opulently clear. "Bush and company set out to exploit the fears and desires of Americans, the fears of more terror attacks and the desires for peace and security" (Rutherford, 31). By tapping into the patriotic fervor that was unleashed by the attacks on that fateful day, the administration could and did manipulate the already present awareness of Saddam's threat into a much bigger frenzy of public opinion. "As late as February 2001, by a margin of 52 percent to 42 percent, Americans expressed approval for using ground troops to remove Saddam". As expected, this number skyrocketed to 74 percent a short time after September (Western, 192). It need not matter that at the time Saddam Hussein was not being linked to the terrorist attacks in New York City. American's were so distraught by the attacks on their home turf that any threat that made itself apparent to the better interests of the American way of life needed to be taken out swiftly.

Afghanistan and its resident Taliban terrorists was the first target of opportunity, as it was known to be harboring the terrorist mastermind Osama Bin laden and his sponsored training camps with links to Al-Qaeda. It was not difficult, therefore, for Bush and his peers to make the public link necessary to launch a war with those connected to the individuals responsible for the attacks on the twin towers. Military success there immediately following September 11<sup>th</sup> fueled the flames of continued action elsewhere in

the Middle East as the administration made it clear that it intended to make use of the opportunistic momentum. Launching a second war however, would be no small task, and convincing the public that it was an absolutely necessary part of securing future freedom required a full frontal assault on national opinion.

### **Organizing the Sale-Administration Marketing Groups**

The planning process that the administration came up with for gathering support for the war was ironically similar to that which was used to prepare for the war itself. Offices and committees were formed to brainstorm, plan, and execute different functions of a collective marketing effort, just as the same process was taking place in the Pentagon for launching a logistically complex military offensive. Sitting atop the network of pro-war marketing groups was the White House Iraq Group, formed by President Bush's Chief of Staff Andrew Card. Its main objective was to formulate the official White House stance on issues dealing with Iraq, and organize its proliferation to the public through uniformity within the administration.

While he was busy building consensus within his administration, President Bush also tasked his key communications staff to develop a comprehensive strategy to sell the administration's case for war and to establish strict "message discipline" on statements coming from the White House. President Bush's chief of staff, Andrew Card, and his staff created the White House Iraq Group to coordinate the "daily message on Iraq."

The team also monitored many of the public comments of senior administration officials and worked to keep them in line with the daily message (Western, 201).

A uniform message would need to be constantly reiterated, and to do this it was necessary to eliminate any divergent public comments by monitoring all those that could make statements to the press. The group's membership included individuals who were part of

Bush's speechwriting team and top advisors who all worked collectively to shift national opinion to buying war with Iraq.

It was during a WHIG meeting that the rhetoric involving a "smoking gun" and "mushroom cloud" was created by Michael Gerson, a Bush speechwriter, rendering this group to be more like a main-street marketing company than a government committee. Just two of the many rhetorical devices that was incessantly repeated on television, in the newspaper and throughout the internet by the administration, there was little difference in purpose between them and name brand catchphrases run during Monday Night Football commercials. The objective was one and the same; hook consumers through repetition of a recognizable phrase that they relate to your product. Effectively capitalizing on emotions left over from 9/11, WHIG was able to project American's fear onto Iraq in the form of a potential future attack. Gerson was also the author of the famous phrase, "axis of evil", which had a specific purpose much like the "smoking gun".

Bush's speechwriters, David Frum and Michael Gerson, invented the term "axis of evil." It was consciously intended to convey three things. First, "axis" implied that, directly or indirectly, Al Qaeda and Iraq were linked...Second "evil" was included to convey that Iraq and groups like Al Qaeda were irrational...And third and perhaps the most significantly, the term alluded to a parallel with World War II-total war-and the need for massive commitment (Western, 196).

Every word that was uttered by an administration official from immediately after September 11<sup>th</sup> to the launching of the war had a distinct purpose of winning over national opinion. By harnessing all the emotions that had erupted after 9/11, WHIG was able to slowly ingrain into the minds of the public that in fact, Iraq was a key component of responding to the terrorist threat, regardless of the actual validity of this thought process. Of course, WHIG had help from other groups to market the message of war.

One such marketing group was the Office of Global Communications, which the White House established to maintain the image of America's foreign policy in a positive light by widely proliferating constructive information about the administration's goals in Iraq. "In September, the *Times* of London reported that OGC would spend \$200 million for a 'PR blitz against Saddam Hussein' aimed 'at American and foreign audiences...'" (Rampton, Stauber, 38). The Office was not only responsible for managing public relations within the United States, where one would think support is the most important, but also abroad, where international allies could be collected on an ideological level for the war effort. Especially in Arab nations, where the administration was expecting to expend a significant amount of energy over the next couple of years, efforts had to be made to soften citizens to the ideologies and policies of the United States. In addition, the OGC kept a tight leash on messages being projected abroad, much like WHIG did the same domestically.

A more aggressive organization in terms of infiltrating and shifting national opinion was the Committee for the Liberation of Iraq formed in November of 2002. With many of the same members as the Neoconservative Project for the New American Century, the CLI had great interest in securing a favorable view for war in the eyes of the public. Not only were its members highly motivated, but also highly connected, able to secure meetings with administration officials like National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice to discuss foreign policy on Iraq.

The *New York Times* reported that the 'hawkish' group, 'formed with the White House's tacit approval,' was looking for additional funding for activities that would include 'making contacts with journalists, holding dinner sessions with administration officials and meeting with editorial boards' across the country. 'It is also encouraging its members to hold

lectures around the US, creating opportunities to penetrate local media markets' (Rampton, Stauber, 53-55).

With such a great range of influence, the CLI was able to extensively impact national opinion, even on the local level. It is immeasurable how many news stories were aired or published as a result of efforts by the CLI, but its reach to the public during the buildup to the war as a "non-governmental" organization was surely impressive.

For the different departments of government involved in planning for the war, each had its own role to play as a mover of public opinion. For his part at the Pentagon Rumsfeld created a separate marketing entity called the Strategic Communications Group, which, in line with his personal style of management, he could control from his desk. Rumsfeld's organization was unofficial, but still contributed to the overall promotional effort of the administration.

According to *PR Week*, Pentagon spokeswoman Victoria Clarke, the former director of Hill and Knowlton's Washington office, brought together 'this group of Beltway lobbyist, PR people and Republican insiders' One of their tasks was to review Pentagon efforts to convince the public of direct links between terrorism and rogue states, like Iraq, that harbor terrorism (Western, 202).

Across the river at the State Department, toiling creative minds birthed yet another selling apparatus for moving the war in Iraq forward. Instead of directly targeting the American public, the Iraq Diplomacy Group's job function was to train Iraqi dissidents in the subtleties of American Media. "The anti-Saddam Iraqis received coaching to help them look good on talk shows, give speeches and write newspaper opinion pieces. The training they received however, was not only how to look good while muttering anti-Saddam rhetoric, but also concerned exactly what kind of rhetoric they should be using (Rampton, Stauber, 55). In this way the State Department could not only control what the voices of

internal dissent within Iraq looked like, but also exactly what they were saying.

Responding to fluctuations in public opinion, then, became as simple as altering the coaching that the dissidents received.

The effect that these various groups had on the post 9/11 media environment was a flooding of pro-war rhetoric revolving around the annihilation of global terrorism and the threat of Saddam. While this proved to be a positive characteristic of pre-war America for those with interests of entering Iraq, within the landscape of national media grew a troubling sense of enhanced patriotism that effectively extinguished the role of responsible journalism. So caught up in the fervor of retaliation and preemption, national groupthink rejected any attempts to go against the idea of action. Individuals, news organizations, and politicians that presented salient arguments about not taking an aggressive stance in response to 9/11 were immediately deemed as unpatriotic, sympathetic to terrorism, and removed from the public spotlight. Accordingly this facilitated the use of less than credible evidence to lead America to war while leaving sources unchecked, setting the country on a damaging foreign policy escapade that is still has yet to recover from.

### **Weapons of Mass Marketing-Weaponized Patriotism**

If a heightened sense of patriotism was the trigger of such a mutated state of national media, it is necessary to examine what exactly characterizes the word “patriotism”. By definition, patriotism is the affection for and dedication to one’s country. What is left out in a simple definition, however, is the motivational aspects that the emotions involved with patriotism have the potential to bring about. As seen

repeatedly throughout history during Pearl Harbor, the Gulf of Tonkin, and more recently September 11, 2001, patriotism is amplified when foreign enemies are perceived to be threatening the American way of life. The highly charged sentiments that result on a national scale are much like those that arise after an individual is attacked by another, mainly that of revenge. Continuing on the individual scale, all logic can be bypassed on the road to satisfying this post-attack emotion as judgment is clouded by the desire for an immediate response. Unfortunately, this is what can also happen on the national level. Fortunately during World War II, the emotions that were aroused after the events of Pearl Harbor were in response to a legitimate threat of national security, that of the axis powers and their apparent ability to do harm to the United States.

For both the Gulf of Tonkin and September 11<sup>th</sup> incidences, however, the subsequent motivations following these events were arguable both misdirected and out of proportion. It should have been learnt from the Vietnam War that during a time of pending foreign policy dilemmas, the susceptibility of the public to less than credible persuasion techniques is increased significantly. Yet, the irresistible sensations that arouse the desire for action and are undoubtedly tied to the notion of patriotism are difficult to control. Immediately following September 11<sup>th</sup> many Americans felt as Wilton Sekzer did, a retired New York City policeman whose son died during the attack. Sekzer, discussing the emotions he felt after American leaders called for action against the terrorist threat: “We haven’t caught Bin Laden, but, you know, lets do something. Who was responsible, common lets hit him! Oh, Iraq was responsible, good lets go! You say Iraq, lets go! Lets get in there, lets kick the hell out of them! ” (Wilton Sekzer, *Why We Fight*). It was exactly this kind of response the fueled and encouraged the complete



patriotic transformation of national media into a warmongering machine. Lessons learned from the initiation of the Vietnam War had receded behind a newfound fervor for revenge.

As a result, any attempts to shed light on a peaceful move forward after the attacks in New York were instantly trampled upon by national groupthink. Part of the reason the administration worked so diligently to ensure the suppression of anti-war sentiment was a different lesson learned from the Vietnam era, that of popularity. “In explaining his concern for the relationship between public relations and war, Bush said, ‘I am a product of the Vietnam era. I remember presidents trying to wage wars that were very unpopular, and the nation split’” (Western, 194). Bush and his officials were convinced that the buildup to, and coverage of the war in Iraq had to be much different than that of conflicts past. Body bags, death counts, national media coverage of massive anti-war protests, rallies, and intensive political opposition triggered a systemic tear in national unity, exactly what Bush planned to work hard to prevent. By setting unwritten rules for the national media to follow, a specific culture of positive propaganda not only strengthened the call to war, but also prevented it from being challenged.

During the buildup to the War with Iraq, television networks that aired any news coverage shedding negative light on the message administration officials continued to churn out were labeled as bastions of terrorism. Major network CEOs felt pressure from political connections to instead take off coverage of protests and pieces undermining the legitimacy of the administration’s evidence for war and put in its place supportive material that endorsed a foreign war. “The *New York Times* reported in September 2001 that TV networks were ‘increasingly coming under criticism from conservatives who say

they exhibit a lack of patriotism or are overly negative toward the government’”

(Rampton and Stauber, 167). Walter Isaacson, then Chairman and CEO of CNN even noted that “you would get phone calls, you would get advertisers, you would get the administration,...you would get big people saying your being anti-American here”

(Walter Isaacson, *Buying the War*). In essence, motivated by fear of being labeled as unsupportive of American interests, national media sources succumbed to the pressures of bandwagon journalism, negating to follow through with well rounded coverage of the move to war. In the public spotlight, being known as an organization or individual who reported news that was opposed to the strong defense policies of the post 9/11 administration was an extreme liability. It was not in the best interest of media professionals or politicians looking to make a name for themselves to oppose a growing nationalistic fervor harnessed by the influence of the administration. Those who did choose to oppose the universal message, however, faced their own set of obstacles.

As the airwaves and fiber-optic networks of America were being flooded with an increasingly persistent call to war, those who refused to be blinded by the cloud of patriotic fervor had to fight hard to have their voice of unrelenting carefulness be heard. Networks like FOX, CNN, ABC, etc which all claimed to be unbiased media sources had little to no coverage of anti-war sentiment as they felt massive pressure from the national interest. Indeed when individuals or groups did try to make an appearance, they were quickly shut down and stamped unpatriotic. On February 24, 2003, a month before America went to war, Bill O'Reilly had on his show *The O'Reilly Factor* an anti-war supporter whose father had died on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Instead of letting Jeremy Glick express his opinion about launching a costly and potentially damaging war in the Middle

East, O'Reilly interrupted Glick over 20 times, slandered him with offensive language, telling him to "shut up", and eventually cut the feed to his microphone (Rampton, Stauber, 162). On a network that boasts being "fair and balanced" this showing by O'Reilly may have launched an online hate crusade against Glick by FOX supporters, but it also fueled those with an anti-war voice to continue the fight of having their message heard.

Groups such as moveon.org, United for Peace and Justice, CODEPINK, Military Families For Peace, Military Families Speak Out, A.N.S.W.E.R, and Veterans For Peace, had the difficult job of un-selling the public what the administration and national media had been spoon feeding since right after 9/11. Allies in such a struggle, historically, had been Democrats willing to put up a fight against going to war. However, the halls of congress remained silent with the absence of any substantial challenge from the left. Forced to go it alone then, these groups launched media campaigns against the goliath networks.

Whatever the rhetoric about a free press, they either lacked the monies to buy time or they were refused the privilege of buying time on the major broadcast and cable networks....the peace movement could not easily employ the same media to reach the public directly. Such were the limits on debate in America (Rutherford, 45).

One weapon that the movement did possess was celebrity backing. Many of the few advertisements run on cable networks about anti-war websites and groups were endorsed by well-known faces from Hollywood. The popularity of celebrities gave anti-war interests a detectable voice away from the classic media avenues its opponents were using. Certainly the Dixie Chick fiasco is an example of the effect this tactic could have. Specifically, when performing live sometime before the invasion, a member of the band

publicly announced the group's distaste for President Bush's policies in Iraq, sparking a frenzy of mixed responses from fans. Regardless of the response, celebrity endorsements such as this had a much more fervent response than any network commercial run during the buildup to the war.

### **Military Intelligence-“Hard Evidence”**

However strong the response may have been, however, the administration had a much more powerful weapon on their side, that of military intelligence. No rhetoric used by the anti-war movement could have been more powerful than the public release of threatening pieces of intelligence about Iraq's links to al-Qaeda and its possession of weapons of mass destruction. By constantly reinforcing the reality of these two themes with repetitive announcements and frequent hints of “intelligence reports”, the administration moved its case forward in the eye of national interest despite the better efforts of its few opponents. As is now known, however, much of the material that it used to effectively market the war was completely fabricated or later proven to be false.

Because its members planned and carried out the attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup>, al-Qaeda was a high priority target for the administration, and an easy sell point for the hungry national interest. Linking the organization to Iraq then would provide an excellent foundation through which Bush and his officials could make a case for war. There was, however, no provable link between Saddam's Iraq and the terrorist organization responsible for the collapse of the twin towers. All that existed was a woolly piece of intelligence alleging that the leader of the 9/11 hijackers Mohammed Atta had met with a consul at the Iraqi Embassy in Prague. “Despite the lack of any credible evidence that the

Atta-Iraq meeting ever occurred, Bush administration officials continued to promote the rumor, playing a delicate game of not-quite-lying insinuations..."(Rampton, Stauber, 93). Just by mentioning Iraq and al-Qaeda in the same sentence repeatedly over time, national interest would begin to relate the two without any provable evidence of an actual link. Although it was later proven by the FBI that Atta was in Virginia during the time he was allegedly meeting with the Iraqi consul, this information was not reinforced by the administration as it continued to insist details behind the matter were "classified". Not necessarily having to lie to the press, but instead creating a bubble of mystery around the subject, the public was misled to believe that there was in fact a connection between al-Qaeda and Iraq.

As time went on, however, the administrations insistence that there was in fact a provable link between the two parties increased significantly. Although there was never an official release of intelligence proving it, the administration began to make bold claims about the connection.

Condoleezza Rice stated... 'There clearly are contacts between al-Qaeda and Iraq that can be documented'. Rumsfeld, speaking at a Chamber of Commerce luncheon in Atlanta claimed that he had 'very reliable' and 'credible' reporting that Iraq and al-Qaeda had 'discussed safe haven opportunities in Iraq, reciprocal nonaggression discussions' and that... this evidence was 'bullet-proof' (Western, 208).

Such confidence was translated to a national interest uninterested in searching out supporting evidence for these claims. Belief in these claims stemmed from a complete lack of understanding about the goals the ideologies of both Iraq and the terrorist organization al-Qaeda run by Osama bin Laden. For Americans overcome with emotion after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, it was enough to take the administration on its word and direct their anger towards an alliance of "evil" between Saddam and bin Laden.

However, a scholar of the Middle East would be quick to point out that the two leaders could almost be guaranteed to disagree with each other's agenda, with the exception of their desires to wound the United States.

Osama bin Laden's goal is the establishment of a politically indivisible Muslim community, and he regarded Saddam and all other secular Arab leaders as infidels...Bracketing al-Qaeda with Saddam is on par with equating Nazism and Soviet communism during the interwar period as examples of European extremism, and represents the kind of quasi-racist dismissal by Washington of differences between Arab countries and the political movement that most irks people in the region (Record, 51).

Although Saddam and bin Laden would not disagree that the United States is an impediment to their interests, they would ardently disagree about what the future should look like for the Arab world. Nevertheless at press conferences across the country Bush administration officials continued to sell the premise that these two leaders were in fact consorting with each other, and there was irrefutable evidence to prove it. During a March 6, 2003 press conference, president Bush invoked both "9/11 and al-Qaeda to justify a preemptive attack on a country that did not attack America" (Bill Moyers, *Buying the War*).

There was only one other inference that Bush made more than Saddam's link to bin Laden's terrorist organization and that was the dictator's proven possession of weapons of mass destruction. The origination of this claim came from the historical fact that Saddam had indeed possessed chemical weapons, and used them on his own people. The dictator had even allowed weapons inspectors into Iraq in 1991 who found WMDs, tested and destroyed them to ensure no future use. For those interested in invading Iraq, it was convenient to assume that Saddam had hid some weapons over the years, manufactured new ones, or was in the process of obtaining them, as a justification for

going to war. Officially, the formal 2000 National Intelligence Estimate stated that Saddam was in possession of chemical agents capable of being inserted into warheads. “This conclusion was drawn largely from accounting discrepancies between what Iraq had previously told U.N. weapons inspectors it possessed, and what records showed had been destroyed” (Woodward, 2004, 194). To the public, officials sold this assumption as fact and spurred a fearful reaction that when in tandem with Iraq’s alleged links to al-Qaeda, painted a picture of an irrefutable threat to America.

Despite the lack of evidence, the administration time and again came up with apparently overwhelming intelligence of Iraqi WMD programs destined to result in American casualties. One blockbuster report claimed that Saddam had been discovered attempting to obtain high-strength aluminum tubes, the kind used for centrifuges during the uranium enrichment process. Those within the Bush administration receiving this intelligence wasted no time in employing it within their effort to market the war to the public.

What these senior members of the administration failed to disclose, however, was that the end use of the aluminum tubes had been the subject of intensive debate within the U.S. intelligence community for the better part of a year and many of the government’s top nuclear scientists ‘seriously doubted’ that the tubes were meant for nuclear weapons production (Western, 2003).

By distorting the truth into workable pieces of promotional material, Bush and the various others interested in intervention in Iraq possessed a powerful means to achieve their goals. Additionally, incessant reporting of material such as this after its initial release carried on for weeks on major networks, proliferating what the administration believed to be hard evidence for the masses. It ranged from sketchy reports including the aluminum tube story to the even more bizarre claim that Saddam was amassing a fleet of

unmanned drone aircraft fitted with biological weapons that could reach the United States. It is highly doubtful, according to Air Force experts that Iraq had such capabilities at the time, but nevertheless Americans ate up the faulty intelligence as fact.

Although it was not possible to empirically prove much of what the administration was reporting to the public about Iraqi WMD's, it was however possible to calculate its effects on public interest. Every speech given by an administration official seemed to increase the confidence in which the nation believed the unverified evidence they were being spoon-fed from all angles. Polls before and after major announcements took note of this phenomenon, and a few in particular are worthy to note. Cheney's speech before the Veterans of Foreign Wars is one such occurrence where the rhetoric used involving WMD's, Iraq's link to al-Qaeda, and the ever-present threat of another 9/11 atrocity kept the audience on the edge of its seats.

In mid-August before Cheney's speech, a CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll found that 55 percent of those polled believed that Saddam 'currently possessed' weapons of mass destruction, while 39 percent thought he was trying to develop them. After the speech, a CBS/New York Times poll reported that 79 percent of Americans believed that Iraq "currently possessed" such weapons (Western, 204).

Gravely hinting at the fact that Saddam was believed to have in his arsenal hundreds of thousands of pounds of lethal weaponized toxins ready to rain down on American skies, it is no wonder that there was such a substantial increase in national opinion about Iraqi WMDs after Cheney's speech. When administration officials mislead the public about essential facts of foreign policy to suite the interests of the former, it is impossible for national interest to make correct decisions for its wellbeing. Of course America needed to respond to the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, but it was by the calculated marketing campaign



of the administration that the public chose to unknowingly align its interests with that of officials in the government.

A vehicle that was used extensively for coercing the public onto its side by Bush and his peers was the Office of Special Plans. The link between al-Qaeda and Iraq, as well as Saddam's possession of WMD's were both generated from within this one office, which post-facto has taken much criticism for fabrication of intelligence, particularly from industry insiders. Ex-CIA officer Chalmers Johnson notes in the documentary *Why We Fight* that the office's main job was to do exactly what it was being criticized for. Namely, "The Office of Special Plans was created in the Rumsfeld Department of Defense in order to produce the intelligence that the President and the Vice President wanted making an enemy out of Iraq" (Chalmers Johnson, *Why We Fight*). Saddam's alleged search for Nigerian yellowcake uranium, the discovery of dump trucks that could be used as missile platforms, the pre-mentioned unmanned aircraft, were all figments formulated by the Office of Special Plans. Whatever intelligence could be spun to appear threatening, the OSP would find, disseminate, and pass off as an ominous fact of the Iraqi regime. Pentagon insiders such as retired Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski, who were aware of the initial form of such intelligence, were also aware of the distorting role the OSP played in the marketing effort for the administration.

'We were, all of us, myself included, were familiar with what the intelligence was saying about Iraq, but the problem was when you looked at what was in these talking points...Taking bits of intelligence, without the qualifiers, without the rest of the story, and placing as a bullet and presenting it as if it's a factoid....These guys were manipulating public opinion, uh, creating falsehoods and fantasies to inspire fear in the American people so that they could have their war!' (Lt. Col. Karen Kwiatkowski, *Why We Fight*).

The talking points that Kwiatkowski speaks of are what could be heard during press conferences, State of the Union addresses, interviews, and as quotations in national media pieces. Unfortunately, for the national interest that was being manipulated by these talking points, the OSP was not the only faction maneuvering information for its own benefit.

Mohammed Chalabi and his gang of Iraqi exiles were the hand of influence that fit like a glove into the game of selling the war to the American public. Despite his tarnished reputation with the CIA for being a fraud and less than honorable leader, Chalabi was able to swindle millions into believing that Saddam did indeed possess WMDs, reinforcing much of the material that was being pumped out of the Bush administration and into the national press. Ironically, Chalabi's tactic was to supply both the administration and the press with access to exiles, which created a revolving door of information that, from the perspective of either side, looked legitimate. "When Chalabi made selected Iraqi defectors available to the press it was a win-win game. The defectors got a platform; journalists got big scoops (Bill Moyers, *Buying the War*). The scoops to the journalists, and intelligence to the government officials, however, were not legitimate. They were instead the fabricated fantasies of Chalabi, legitimized by the administration on account of an otherwise arid landscape of Iraqi intelligence. Neoconservative Richard Perle, a member of the PNAC and tied to members of the Bush administration went so far as to say, "The INC has been without question the single most important source of intelligence about Saddam Hussein" (Ricks, 57). In addition, Chalabi was cited numerous times in the various pieces that Judith Miller wrote for the New York Times about the state of WMD production within Iraq. His exiled peers would go on extremely popular

national talk shows, draw pictures of Saddam's chemical weapons facilities, claim they worked in them, discuss the regimes capabilities, and in all paint a very scary picture for viewers across the nation. Regrettably the picture they were painting was not real, but a prefabricated illusion set up by Chalabi and encouraged by the administration to satisfy their collective interests of American intervention in Iraq.

Apparently it is a simple task to get a country to go to war with little justification. All you need is a unifying event bringing together a nation under a blanket of patriotism, a target, and the ability to warp actual intelligence into foreboding news through smoke and mirrors. The Bush administration was able to follow this system with drastic systemic effects. It may be many years before Americans again trust the media and government officials spewing magnificent claims, as well as throw their support behind a particular development in foreign policy. Accountability will have to be developed before a return to a trusting relationship can take place. Instead of a manipulative tool for the powerful, the media should instead be a gateway for the citizens to see the world through the lens of their own interests. The damage may in fact, be unfixable as some of those who participated in the less than honorable persuasion to invade Iraq are still making policy. Perhaps the public has simply given up on seeking an honest system of governmental and media oversight. For the benefit of future Americans, there must be hope that the lesson learned from the Iraq war media catastrophe is one involving ensuring the verification of credible sources and the continuation of responsible journalism. The vulnerability exhibited by Americans during the buildup to the Iraq war was a consequence of the human condition. Emotionally the nation let its guard down and was taken advantage of by those individuals with enough drive to accomplish their selfish

goals and believed that citizen's sentiments were seen more as implements than feelings.

These goals, however, were destined to fail as the interests involved continued their carelessness beyond the marketing campaign and into planning for what would happen after the war.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Individual Interests and Their Effect on The Post-War Planning Process**

The run up to war in Iraq from September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 to the launching of ground forces on March 20<sup>th</sup> 2003 included a series of highly rushed and condensed efforts to plan not only for a full scale invasion, but also for the establishment of post-conflict stability. It is clear that the Bush administration accomplished the first of these two goals having witnessed the quickness and ease that the American military rolled over their enemies through the use of highly skilled and equipped forces. The latter goal, however, continued to be a complete failure until President Obama announced in August of 2010 a cessation of combat and gradual withdrawal of troops from the region. What exactly caused this failure is not an easy question to answer. However, it is quite clear from the various interests that were involved in launching military action there, that the destabilization of post-war Iraq was facilitated by a comprehensive lack of care about the results, and in addition, unique malfunctions by each individual interest in the manner in which they prepared for it. By looking at the effects that each interest had on the post-war planning effort, the failure that resulted will no longer be so shrouded.

### **President Bush-Lack of Attentiveness to Long Term Consequences**

At the highest levels, the President of the United States is the public official most responsible for decisions made about foreign policy. What happened in Iraq will forever be George W. Bush's legacy, and the choices that he made during his two terms in office reflect the degree to which he was willing to prepare for, and execute decisions with all available knowledge. Unfortunately for the President, America, and Iraq itself, the events

of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the possible resentment for Saddam's attempt on his father's life, and a variety of over zealous advisors led the commander and chief to erect a legacy that is in no way flattering in this respect. While he accomplished a picture perfect military victory with the might of his armed forces, Bush was nevertheless clouded from the reality that success on the battlefield would need to be immediately followed by success in capturing the hearts and minds of every Iraqi. The failure to pay attention to this detail is what quickly led to a chaotic situation after the fall of Baghdad, and in addition the development of a lethal and capable insurgency. While others are surely to blame for the developments that took place, above all else is the president's responsibility to make the best choices for America's interests. Those made for the planning of the post-war period of Iraq were clearly not among this best caliber.

While it is hard to believe, within the top levels of the administration there was little to no dialogue about the possible need for intense effort to be expended after the cessation of military activity during the invasion of Iraq. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Douglas Feith notes that when looking through briefing memos relating to the topic, "You will not find a single piece of paper...that says, 'Mr. President, let us tell you what postwar Iraq is going to look like, and here is what we need plans for'" (Fallows, 45). Such a wholesale disregard of necessary preparations seems improbable, but the answer to why it occurred is simply one of priorities. After September 11<sup>th</sup>, Bush was hard pressed to respond to the attacks with military force. As mentioned, Iraq was not a first choice for action, but after the initial success in Afghanistan, it was found to be the next logical target for retribution against terrorist activities. The time that was spent breaking down the potential consequences of attacking the country were very limited.

Other than within the small camp of anti-war individuals such as Powell, Scowcroft, etc inside the administration, all energies in the White House were focused on prepping for a triumphant initial attack. Bush's number one priority at the time was to utilize the success of this attack to validate his new preventive strategy of foreign policy. Unfortunately for post-war planning:

At the top level of the administration attention swung fast, and with little discussion, exclusively to Iraq. This sent a signal to the working levels, where daily routines increasingly gave way to preparations for war, steadily denuding the organizations that might have been thinking about other challenges (Fallows, 129).

Evidently, Bush's priority of achieving victory in the name of preemption far outweighed the desire to take seriously the possible repercussions of that action.

It seems as if Bush was operating under an ideology of carelessly making decisions without any conception of the consequences. It should have been obvious that invading Iraq would have negative systemic outcomes, and it was foolish to assume nearsighted preparation should take higher precedence than post-war planning. Bush's ignorance of these facts laid the groundwork for failure before the invasion even began. The famous analogy of a dog chasing a car and not knowing what to do with it once caught truly applies to this scenario. Indeed Bush's intentions of attempting to make the world a safer place for democracy by removing an oppressive dictator were valid, but his methods were much too front heavy.

Leadership is always a balance between making large choices and being aware of details. George W. Bush has an obvious preference for large choices. This gave him his chance for greatness after the September 11 attacks. But his lack of curiosity about significant details may be his fatal weakness. When decisions made during this time are assessed and judged, the administration will be found wanting for its carelessness. Because of the warnings it chose to ignore, it squandered American prestige, fortune, and lives (Fallows, 106).

It would be one thing if Bush's inaction relating to post-war planning were caused by a lack of available data about the possible situation in Iraq after the end of large-scale violence. But as Fallows tells, the data was available in abundance, placing the blame of the failed post-war Iraq on those who chose to ignore it.

Although the exact recommendations of government organizations about what to do with post-war Iraq will be detailed later, it is important to note now that the amount of information available from a variety of sources was enough to thoroughly plan for stabilizing the post-Saddam environment. Information on what to do about supplying water, electricity, disbanding the Iraqi military, etc, was all heavily researched and prepared for implementation. The main problem however was that the administration completely disagreed with these recommendations, and instead proceeded blindly with what it wrongfully thought was the best course of action. Sam Gardiner, a retired Air Force Colonel noted about a Bush administration official that when he tried to bring up the poor condition of the post-war plan, the official responded, "Oh, this is kinda hard. You know, the president has already spent an hour on the postwar stuff... We can't raise anything again. (Ferguson, 51). The blatant preference from the highest echelons of the administration to focus all efforts on the war itself and away from post-war development was crippling to those who saw the storm coming. The individuals and groups who knew what the realities of the post-war squall would be like were no match for the influence of top advisors to the president and Bush's own stubbornness in failing to diverge from his priorities. In fact, there was not only available data, but also entire frameworks of reconstruction submitted by various organizations for the administration's consideration. Bush and his peers simply passed over these plans while carrying out preparations for the



war. An Iraqi who participated in a post-war planning project recalled, “There was never any dialogue on it....Each plan had its good aspects, but the president needed to get behind one plan and say, “This is going to be it’. He never did (Diamond, 2004, 29).

The continued theme of the administration lacking an extensive dialogue on post-war planning as well as ignoring the available evidence that something had to be done to meet the needs of the post-invasion environment solidifies the claim that Bush and his administration added much to the failure that resulted. Bush’s involvement in the Iraq war will forever be recorded as insufficient and ill prepared as a result. “The Bush administration will be condemned for what it did with what was known. The problems the United States has encountered are precisely the ones its own expert agencies warned against” (Fallows, 48). The guilt, however, can be more evenly spread over those operating in Washington at the time of the planning of the invasion. While Bush controlled from the top, those directly below him were just as guilty of intoxicating a healthy post-war effort.

### **Neoconservatives-Unrealistic Expectations**

Neocons, including the emphatic Paul Wolfowitz, added their own brand of negativity in regards to the post-war planning process. For them, the idea of planning for an environment anything less than ideal after the war was to weaken the case for intervention in the first place, and thus reduce popular support for their interest in taking preventive action. By ignoring the topic and justifying their actions through the absolute necessity of getting rid of Saddam, the neocons helped fuel the failure of post-war Iraq.

The pro war group avoided question about what would happen after a victory, because to consider postwar complications was to weaken the

case for a preemptive strike. Some war advocates even said, if pressed, that the details of postwar life didn't matter. With the threat and the truant eliminated, the United States could assume that whatever regime emerged would be less dangerous than the one it replaced (Fallows, 8).

It can be argued that the neocons did not place great weight on the post-war environment because their main goal was to remove the Iraqi threat to Israel. What happened after this goal was accomplished, as long as it was not a threat to the Jewish homeland, seemed to matter little. Therefore, destruction, chaos, and even anarchy in the streets after the fall of Baghdad would have been acceptable to the neocons who believed as long as the country was weak, Israel was safe from an Iraqi threat. Nevertheless, the neocons believed, at least publicly, that the situation would in fact be welcoming to the proliferation of American interests.

At the heart of the neocon's negligence for post-war planning was an assumption that the setting would be calm, controlled by internal forces, and in fact celebratory about the downfall of Saddam Hussein. Because of the noble and patriotic mission that neocons thought they were embarking on by freeing the Middle East of an atrocious dictator, the assumption was made that those they were freeing would have congruent feelings as to the justification of the act. During a March 11, 2003 speech given to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Wolfowitz "likened the coming U.S. invasion of Iraq to Eisenhower's liberation of France: 'The Iraqi people understand what this crisis is about. Like the people of France in the 1940's, they view us as their hope-for liberator...'"(Record, 95-6). Comparing the freeing of Nazi controlled France from the clutches of an anti-Semitic regime is not only metaphorically consistent with Wolfowitz's desires to protect the Jewish nation of Israel, but also in line with the claim that he and his neoconservative peers had unrealistic expectations about their interests in Iraq. Perhaps their

overwhelming craving to secure a sheltered environment in the Middle East for Israel clouded neocon judgment about what would occur after a military invasion. But, whatever the case, although Iraqi citizens certainly welcomed the overthrow of their dictator they were in no way as receptive as the French during WWII and certainly did not support the long occupation that followed their liberation.

Because the neocons felt so strongly about their expectations of the post-war Iraq environment, their rhetoric and activities continued to reflect an almost unprofessional level of situational disregard. Comments such as the one above made by Wolfowitz,

reflect an insensitivity to war's inherent fickleness. They further betray a naiveté about not only the coercive power of a totalitarian regime fighting for its very survival but also how Iraqis, numbingly propagandized by Saddam and impoverished for more than a decade by economic sanctions championed most loudly by the United States and Britain, might react to an invading occupying Anglo-American army (Record, 96).

To not possess an awareness of the effects of the historical relationship between the west and the east on the undertaking of an Iraqi occupancy is telling of the lack, or perhaps distortion of cultural perspective that the neocons retained. Within the corridors of policy-making chambers in Washington, their peers took notice of the cultural deficit. Barbara Bodine, a former ambassador to Yemen and an ambassador in residence at the University of California, Santa Barbara who was hired by the reconstruction effort, noted that when she was briefing Defense Department officials about potentially troubling post-war scenarios dealing with establishing a democracy, Wolfowitz asked, "Why not redraw all the provincial and district boundaries?" To which Bodine responded, "Look at the road network. This is the way the roads go. This is the pattern that has evolved over centuries. This is how Iraqis see themselves" (Diamond, 2004, 31). Concern by experts who were worried about the reconstruction effort being left up to individuals with such a

perceived limited precursory knowledge of what would be required to accomplish goals in post-war Iraq was plentiful. These concerns, however, were based off of the assumption that the neocons truly aimed for immediate restructuring after the cessation of military activity in Iraq. Their aim, in reality was to eliminate their enemies across the Middle East ensuring the preservation of Israel, but not necessarily in the singular swift action of toppling Saddam in Iraq. Their vision for post-war Iraq was instead much more broad, and included the invasion as the starting point of a fourth “World War” against the evilness of Islamic monotheism in its entirety.

According to pre-9/11 neoconservative ideology, enemy number one for the United States was terrorism fueled by Islamic fundamentalism. Events in Iraq therefore were prescribed to be only the tip of the iceberg for the American military effort in combating such an adversary. The world that neocons viewed as the post-war period was one where the United States was fighting a multi-front battle in various localities against its Islamic enemies.

They openly advocated the forceful reconfiguration of the entire Middle East to combat an alleged monolithic Islamic terrorist threat to the United States. It must be emphasized that this concept did not emerge after the U.S. occupation of Iraq, in response to post-invasion contingencies. Rather, the neocons expressed this view prior to September 11, and after the American occupation of Iraq they would argue that the so-called insurgency underscored the regional nature of the terrorist danger (Sniegowski, 187).

This ideology succinctly explains the lack of planning for immediately after the fall of Baghdad on behalf of the neocons simply because they did not intend for post-war effort to be expended upon reconstruction, but instead on the continuation of the frontal assault against Islamic terrorism in the Middle East. Hindsight allows us to see that the neocons were very far off their mark in predicting how the post-war scenario would

unfold. There was no continuation of offensive momentum, and instead American forces remained hung up in Iraq as an occupying force irritating a locality that realized it had exchanged one oppressive rule for another. When pressed in the media after things on the ground became worse, neocons would continue to stress how Iraqi hostility towards the American effort was proof of the dangers that Islamic terrorism presented to the West even after an oppressive dictator had just been removed. The tactic was only putting off the inevitable arousal of intense anti-war sentiments towards neocon leaders at home as news coverage continually bombarded viewers with stories of American military and Iraqi civilian deaths. Eventually neocon leaders had to surrender to their miscalculations.

Paul Wolfowitz admitted in July 2003 that the U.S. Defense Department officials leading the planning estimate had 1. Underestimated the risk that the Ba'ath Party and other irredentist hardliners would present a continuing security threat after Saddam Hussein fell from power; 2. Counted on large numbers of Iraq military police to quickly join the United States and its allies in the nation building effort; and 3. Overestimated Iraqi popular support for the war (Cordesman, 2003, 498).

At a point it became clear to Wolfowitz and his peers that their vision of a full frontal assault against Islamic extremism in the Middle East had been severely impacted by their assumptions about what would happen after the fall of Baghdad. The vision formulated years before the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> about propelling a pro-Israeli crusade by using the justification of Islamic terrorism was held by those in Washington making major policy decisions and ultimately added to the forces preventing the necessary steps for the establishment of a stable post-war Iraq from being made. It is clear that many individuals accurately predicted the conditions of what would take place after the war, but were neither in the position to make important policy decisions, nor able to get through to those that did.

### **Rumsfeld-Running With His Own Plan**

One such decision maker was Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, whose stubbornness to seriously consider the predictions of experts in reconstruction directly influenced the atrocious outcome of post-war Iraq. It is easy to say this because it was his Defense Department that was given direct control over post-war reconstruction, and his decisions made from the top of the department that were ultimately tied to the efforts failure. “It was the first time since World War II that the State Department would not take charge of the post-conflict situation” (Diamond, 2004, 29). Oddly enough, non-governmental organizations and individuals with expertise in reconstruction, the same ones that both Bush and the neocons ignored, lobbied without mercy for a State Department run reconstruction.

This was mainly because they recognized the fact that “by the time Operation Iraqi Freedom was launched, the State Department had, in conjunction with the Middle East Institute, conducted a year’s worth of extensive interagency planning that anticipated many of the postwar problems the United States encountered in Iraq”, while the Defense Department was thoroughly unprepared for the duty (Record, 130). Staffed with individuals like Powell who had initially questioned the motives for getting involved in Iraq, there is little doubt as to why the State Department lost reconstruction responsibilities to the Department of Defense headed by the pro-war Donald Rumsfeld.

It was Rumsfeld whose interests included running the entire Iraq operation from his desk, and so fighting to acquire the rights to direct the post-war effort was an obvious priority. However, while his mounting list of duties involving handling different

segments of the operation may have pleased him, it was an impossible amount of work for one man to oversee. The result was for Rumsfeld to prioritize his “new aged” invasion over the post-war plan, and in the process justify his ignorance of the latter by claiming the impossibility of preparing for an unknown outcome. James Fallows, an author who spent much time discussing the topic with officials in Washington while researching for his book Blind into Baghdad, said of Rumsfeld:

If you came into Donald Rumsfeld’s office with the idea that something was expected, he’d say, ‘no, you can’t make plans for this kind of thing. You can’t predict what’s gonna happen’.... But if you’re planning to run an entire country, and to transform a part of, uh, the Middle East, it would be like Dwight Eisenhower, before D-Day, saying, ‘Hell, who knows what’s gonna happen when they go up those cliffs?’ (Ferguson 57).

The point Fallows highlights very well is that while it may not be possible to prepare for exact situations, precautions can be taken to minimize the time and effort eventually needed to readjust pre-action plans to suite any aftermath. No calculated assumption can be presumed more accurate than others, and all expert opinions must be considered when planning for an event of this magnitude. Rumsfeld, however, took the path of least resistance, putting his own assumptions of a stable post-war Iraq above all.

So, while stressing the impossibility of accurately predicting what post-war conditions would be like, Rumsfeld harbored his own forecasting through which he made policy decisions. The nature of his forecasting allowed him to focus much of his effort on successfully completing his new aged war fought with less troops, more technology, and for a shorter duration. It was namely, that Iraq would be a fertile ground for stable nation building and not require an extensive plan to get up and running.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense assumed that Saddam Hussein’s regime would fall in ways that left much of the Iraqi government and economy functioning, an assessment that ignored both the acute limits to

the process of government under Saddam and the equally acute limits to the efficiency of the Iraqi economy and the ability of Iraqi officials to act without direct orders from above (Cordesman, 2003, 505).

The hypocrisy that Rumsfeld was displaying by refusing to admit the viability of any researched accounts of could-be post-war environments while at the same time formulating and running with his own un-researched predictions, goes to show the carelessness that developed as a byproduct of the desire to fulfill his interests. This carelessness permeated all aspects of Rumsfeld's involvement in the post-war planning process, leading to its failure.

To say that Rumsfeld spent zero time on planning for after the war would be bold. In fact, he did spend some time formulating what should happen during reconstruction, but he did so unfortunately with the inaccurate assumptions mentioned above. Similar to Wolfowitz and the neocons, Rumsfeld showed a cultural and historical naivety that greatly affected the outcome of the reconstructive effort. Rumsfeld simply expected that after the war, American troops would pack up and return home as a unified Iraq pieced itself back together. "His main concern was that American forces should not remain to put down roots as part of some Clinton-style nation-building exercise, as had happened in the Balkans" (Cockburn, 2007, 170). Not only was Rumsfeld's desired plan ignorant of domestic issues in Iraq, including the unpopularity of Chalabi whom he chose to run the post-war government, but also a laundry list of similar nation building examples from elsewhere in the globe. Describing his thoughts on Rumsfeld's "minimalist" post-war planning efforts, George Packer, who has written extensively about the Iraq war notes:

‘And um, it was a ludicrous plan. It was a plan that didn’t begin to grapple with how difficult and dangerous and complex these postwar situations are. We learned that in the nineties; we learned it in Somalia, in Bosnia, in Kosovo, we learned it in Afghanistan, under this administration. But



Donald Rumsfeld and the officials under him decided that they were not going to be deterred by history...And I think they convinced themselves that they were right' (Ferguson, 34).

Chalabi's contribution to the post-war planning effort will be detailed later, but Rumsfeld's ignorance of factors such as the exile's unpopularity does much to paint an accurate picture of neglect within his department's involvement in the post-war planning process.

### **Garner-Initial Post-War Blunders**

Rippling down through the chain of command, Rumsfeld's effect on the post-war planning process was traceable through the manipulation of the policies of retired general Jay Garner who headed the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance, or ORHA, in the Pentagon. Despite what Garner tried to accomplish through his Office, Rumsfeld intervened whenever he felt the retired general deviated from the post-war ideology the defense secretary had established. It was realized very quickly that Garner and Rumsfeld held two completely different views on how the post-war environment would function, and what steps needed to be taken to advance its development. One of the first differences erupted when Garner tried to bring in individuals from the Future of Iraq Project to his team. The project had initially been a State Department funded \$5 million venture into examining the requirements for establishing some sort of stability on the ground immediately following the cessation of military activity in Iraq. Staffed by many individuals who were stringently against the war, the project represented the anti-war sentiment that many interests including the neocons and Rumsfeld tried to suppress in order to launch the invasion. As a result, when Garner tried to inject these interests into

the Defense Department's attempt at reconstruction, Rumsfeld refused to harbor staff with an ideology different to his own.

By the time Garner was appointed, on January 20, 2003 the war was less than two months away, and he began scrambling to put together the core of some two hundred occupation officials he would bring to Baghdad. One of the first people Garner sought out-naturally-was the person who had directed the Future of Iraq Project, Tom Warrick. But Garner later stated that he was ordered by Rumsfeld to remove Warrick from his staff and to ignore the Future of Iraq Project (Diamond, 2004, 30).

As it turns out, much of the speculation about post-war Iraq from the report that the Future of Iraq Project produced and potential members of OHRA worked on, ended up becoming reality. If Rumsfeld had not intervened in Garner's attempts to hire these people, policy would have been implemented based on valid research, and many lives could have potentially been saved.

Garner was not, however, without his own blunders in the area of post-war reconstruction. His individual additions to this category were measurably damaging to the effort, and were without a doubt included in the reasoning behind his quick dismissal. Although many of these mistakes were made directly after the fall of Baghdad, which will be discussed later, general assumptions that were made during the pre-war planning process donated to these failures. The first of which was Garner's general framework for executing the reconstruction of a functional Iraqi state. According to Garner,

First, his team would go into Baghdad and appoint an Iraqi interim government. Second, it would select an Iraqi constitutional convention, which would write a democratic constitution, which would be ratified. Finally, it would hold elections and hand over power to a sovereign Iraqi government by August (Diamond, 2004, 33).

Essentially what Garner laid out was the completion of Iraq democratization in three to four months. This plan was not only logistically absurd, but also continued the expansive

naivety of Iraqi culture and politics within the post-war planning effort. The office that Garner was put in charge of in no way possessed the necessary capabilities of pulling off the retired general's plan. At its start, short staffed with literally no working equipment such as computers or fax machines, many employees were overwhelmed by the task at hand. The pressure put on him by Rumsfeld and the administration to come up with a workable plan is what caused Garner to maintain confidence in a seemingly impossible plan. In the end, however, his differences in opinion about the development of post-war Iraq were too different for the administration. At one point when Garner objected about the soundness of Chalabi's leadership, Undersecretary of Defense Douglas Feith disagreed ardently, signaling Garner to respond, "Doug, you've got two choices. You can either shut the fuck up, or you can fire me" (Ricks, 105). In fact, the administration did fire Garner, replacing him with a more likeminded official, Paul Bremer. It was Bremer who made many of the policy decisions that critics of the war blame for the failure of establishing an effective democratic system after the invasion. Nevertheless, blame for this failure can continue to be spread across the ranks of Washington.

### **Dick Cheney-Democracy, Oil, and Money**

It can be argued that Dick Cheney, interested in advancing the profits of his corporate associates through the use of private contracts and by tapping into the Iraqi oil supply, had a high priority to secure post-war Iraq for the initiation of business. Not only did his peers stand to profit from contracts linked to political security details and the logistics surrounding the oil supply, but also from the necessity to rebuild much of the infrastructure in Iraq destroyed by years of conflict. Therefore, quickly and efficiently

establishing a functioning governmental framework was arguably very important to Cheney in order for business to begin promptly. Cheney also did not want this job to be completed in a lackluster manner in order to ensure the continuation of future business prospects. Publicly, it seems that Cheney disguised this ideology by supporting the institutionalization of a solid democracy, one that would leave Iraq a beacon of progress in the Middle East:

The Vice President had argued, ‘We’ve got an obligation to go stand up a democracy. We can’t go get some former general and put him in charge and say, okay, now you’re the dictator in Iraq. We’ve got to fundamentally change the place. And we’ve got to give the Iraqi people a chance at those fundamental values we believe in’ (Woodward, 2004, 284).

What helped Cheney believe that accomplishing this goal would be possible was his personal understanding that the post-war Iraq environment would already be fairly stable and welcoming to the American military forces present. Such an environment would allow for business to be conducted effortlessly, and without interruption from violence that could potentially disrupt profitable ventures. It would appear then that Cheney was operating, for one reason or another, in the same dogmatic realm as the rest of his peers in the administration by failing to take seriously the threats of far different post-war scenes being painted by topical experts. Cheney, much like he did with WMD’s, publicly endorsed the administration’s thoughts about the post-war Iraq atmosphere, attempting to convince the public of its potential stability instead of informing them about the possibilities of continued hostilities. In a *Meet the Press* interview with Tim Russert, Cheney was asked if he thought the American people were ready for a long drawn out conflict. He responded:

‘Well, I don’t think its likely to unfold that way, Tim, because I really do believe that we will be greeted as liberators...The road we get on the

people of Iraq is there is no question but what they want to get rid of Saddam and they will welcome as liberators the United States when we come to do that '(Fallows, 79-80).

This false sense of post-war security given to the nation through the media is Cheney's contribution to the growing snowball of post-war planning failure. Instead of ensuring the operation's success by preparing for both positive and negative turnouts, the Vice President carried on the administration's false optimism in order to further his own profitable interests.

At the early stages of war planning, Army Central Command was initially put in charge of post-war planning. During this time there was much struggle on behalf of both the State Department and Defense Department to win over the project to each of their bureaucracies. As discussed, the Defense Department was the clear victor in the long run, but this did not stop its leaders from dipping their hands into the dealings of the Central Command while it was still in control of the project. One objection that leaders of the CENTCOM planning team brought up was this interference of Cheney and the Defense Department in seemingly vital issues of reconstruction. John Agoglia, Deputy Chief Planner for CENTCOM, for example, noted that when conferring with Cheney's associates at the Defense Department about extremely important aspects of reconstruction, the chief's team was often left empty handed in terms of being supplied with concrete answers about what needed to be done.

'And the oil one was based on the fact that you have a vibrant oil economy and the potential to sell that oil and use that to help pay for part of the rebuilding of postwar Iraq, okay?...Why are we not getting any answers, you know?... 'Hey, don't worry about it, we're taking care of that'"  
(Ferguson 41).

A possible explanation for this lack of communication is the potential manipulation of logistical priorities surrounding the Iraqi oil supply from rejuvenating the country's infrastructure to profiteering on behalf of Cheney's corporate pals. One would think that specifics surrounding the Iraqi oil supply would be a top priority in any reconstruction planning. It can be argued, however, that Cheney was much more interested in securing oil contracts for his Halliburton and KBR colleagues than making provisions about Iraq's oil supply that would help reestablish stability in the country. Thus as in many of Cheney's dealings with Iraq, his main motive can continue to be shown as profit, seen here with its effects on the post-war planning stages of the operation.

### **Chalabi-A Fix-All For Some in the Post-War Environment**

Unlike the interests discussed previously in this chapter, Ahmed Chalabi's effect on the post-war planning process came through his role as a piece of the puzzle instead of as a mover of them. In fact, the above interests used him as a pawn in their overly optimistic plan to quickly establish a working democratic model in Iraq immediately following the war. They all believed that Chalabi was the perfect choice to lead a new democratic Iraq, already having a solid base of supporters inside the country with enough connectivity to local institutions for facilitating the growth of a synthetic democracy. Some administration officials even went as far as hoping to turn over all reconstruction operations to Chalabi and his government after a preliminary framework had been established.

Although full details are not clear, at least some senior members of the team in the Office of the Secretary of Defense dealing with nation building believed that the Iraqi National Congress, led by Ahmed Chalabi, should form a government in exile and take over much of the nation building

effort once the war began. The idea was rejected because of State Department and other warnings that Chalbi, who had left Iraq in 1958, had little credibility in leading a government in exile....In April, while the war was under way, the department of Defense had Chalabi and 700 of his followers flown to Iraq (Cordesman, 2003, 499).

As Cordesman tells here, those in the extreme camp did not get their wish. Nevertheless, the Defense Department carried out its plan of using Chalabi as a “fix-all” for their need of an Iraqi leadership in the post-war environment. Unfortunately for these individuals Chalabi did not possess the popularity and institutional interconnectivity that he was thought to harbor. His fall from grace in the eyes of his American allies who had promised him a hand in the new Iraqi government will be detailed later, but his involvement in the post-war planning stage of the war must not go unnoticed at this point. He provided the means through which administration officials could answer the question of who would be in power after the war. Having already supplied information about weapons of mass destruction to the White House, Chalabi was seen by some as a trustable Iraqi exile who could be America’s voice in the new Iraq. As it turns out he was much the opposite.

### **A Critique of the Post-War Plan-From the Dissent**

An assessment of the post-war planning period by those who have been previously placed in the “dissent” camp is anything but positive. These are the individuals who fought ardently against the war initially, and had been critics throughout every stage of its development. A fundamental argument they make about the planning process for the post-war involves the perceived tendency of the administration to put other aspects of the operation above the post-war timeframe on its list of priorities.

Accordingly, as attention was diverted elsewhere, opportunities to adequately prepare for the consequences of American military intervention in Iraq were missed or overlooked.

James Fallows, a well-known journalist who studied the war extensively notes his awareness of this trend:

‘And the great surprise to me was the postwar difficulties were not because nobody was doing any planning. In fact, a lot of people were doing very careful planning, and planning that stood up very, very well. The problem was there was this fatal disconnect between the very accurate and prescient scenarios that people had come up with, even the government, and those actually making the decision’ (Ferguson 70).

One such group that was overlooked as a result of this disconnect was the previously discussed Future of Iraq project. Above that of other groups, their report produced before the invasion about the types of scenarios that should be prepared for and the exact steps that should be taken to rebuild Iraqi infrastructure was potentially the most helpful piece of literature going into the post-war planning phase. In it were testimonies from a multitude of Iraqis who collectively represented the expectations of the populace after the termination of armed conflict. Common themes included the importance of restoring the water and electric supply as well as the significance of carefully disarming the Iraqi military. These recommendations were ignored however, and Rumsfeld removed members of the project from the reconstruction effort in favor of those closer to himself.

In addition to the ignorance of highly pertinent information as part of the planning process, some dissent members have also noted the existence of an anomaly within the procedure that systematically limited the attention it received. Specifically, those within the military who looked at operations in Iraq as a way to move up in rank placed less emphasis on the reconstruction effort as they did actual combat. This of course, is because the culture of the military is centered on the violence of combat, achieving



objectives on the battlefield, and eliminating the enemy. For those looking to advance, there was no time to be wasted on less “significant” jobs, according to the culture, such as reconstruction. Similar to the ignorance of highly researched reports, James Fallows was in tune with this phenomenon as well:

‘In the lingo of the modern Pentagon, there are four phases of war, and Phase III is the fun part; that’s when you’re actually blowing things up, and killing people, and dropping bombs, and doing the...uh, what they call the kinetic activity. Phase IV is after that. It’s the occupation, it’s the peacekeeping, it’s the peacemaking. It’s, uh, trying to develop society, the nation-building. And while in theory everybody recognizes that’s important, at least until recently, and certainly before the Iraq war, it was..it was not a real all-star’s job. If you were looking for that next star, if you’re going to be one of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or whatever, you didn’t want to be a Phase IV guy. And so the oomph was all on the people planning the combat, and not afterwards. That was one cultural force inside the military’ (Ferguson 36).

The result of this experience was an exodus of talent away from post-war planning to areas such as invasion operations, combat support logistics, etc. While this certainly does not explain without a doubt the reason behind the failure of the post-war planning process, it is a valid theory of the dissent that adds to the overall case of what exactly went wrong.

The interests that have been discussed mutated the development of post-war preparation in unique ways. Although each for a different reason and through different means, they all made additions to the overarching departure from proper planning that was necessary for a successful transition into the post-war period. Bush, his priorities of executing a successful preemptive war, the neocons, their ardent belief in miscalculated post-war assumptions, Rumsfeld, his negligent treatment in setting up a proper reconstruction apparatus, Cheney, increasingly more concerned with his ability to influence profit making, Chalabi, used as a pawn of those looking for a quick answer to

post-war leadership, and the dissent, focusing on where exactly the administration went wrong, all contributed to the makeup of planning for what would happen after the invasion of Iraq had ended. Unfortunately for the United States each interest was highly self-absorbed, and failed to be motivated by what was best for the country as a whole. Having such a negative foundation at its start, the failure of the post-war plan set a negative tone for the entirety of reconstruction. Everything positive that came out of the successfully efficient ground war has been undone by years of struggle both politically and in continued hostilities. The start of this struggle is the last step in understanding the final effect of these interests on America's efforts in Iraq.

## **Chapter 5**

### **The Beginning of the End: The Start of the American Occupation**

The cessation of major military activity in Iraq signaled the dawning of a new stage for the interests involved in the toppling of Saddam's regime. For some, such as the neoconservative movement, it indicated the accomplishment of an end goal, namely the removal of the Baathist dictator from the Middle East. For others, like the corporate interests linked to Vice President Dick Cheney, it was merely the means to an end not yet realized. Despite their differences in opinion about the liberation of Baghdad, all interests involved contributed to a bureaucratic and logistical breakdown of post-war stabilization. Rearing its head yet again as it had throughout the buildup and execution of the invasion was the theme of horrendous implementation despite more than adequate resources. Available to the administration was a plethora of personnel fit for the job with capabilities greatly beyond what was required for the establishment of stable post-war Iraq, not to mention the necessary funds. Yet, due to a lack of care culminating in a poorly planned policy, a people that America was once seen as freeing mutated into an insurgency bent on harming her. What resulted was an extended occupation that could have easily been avoided given more attention to detail. Nevertheless, this critical period was seriously botched ensuring an environment in Iraq that would become increasingly dangerous and expensive for America to continue its nation-building activities. Why then, such lapses in effective decision-making were committed at this stage is worthy of examination.

Basic physics tells us that the point at which a projectile is most influenced by external factors such as wind, temperature, and humidity is the instant it leaves the

launching platform. Such was also the case for the American occupation of Iraq where a few key decisions made at its start laid the foundations for its eventual demise. For the military in particular, a large force that could have been taking action securing much needed necessities for the Iraqi people, facilitating the reorganization of indispensable infrastructure, or keeping the peace, there was an almost universal loss of direction that stemmed from the absence of an executable plan.

The division's official after-action review states that it had no orders to do anything else: "3<sup>rd</sup> ID transitioned in Phase IV SASO with no plan from high headquarters", it reported. "There was no guidance for restoring order in Baghdad, creating an interim government, hiring government and essential services employees, and ensuring that the judicial system was operational." The result was "a power/authority vacuum created by our failure to immediately replace key government institutions" (Ricks, 151).

The mass looting that resulted went largely unchecked, as American soldiers had no order to stop, prevent, or castigate participants on the streets. The average soldier thought that his return home was imminent and therefore spent the majority of his time participating in aimless patrols with no clear objectives, setting a tone for the entire reconstruction.

### **Jay Garner v. Paul Bremer-Heading up the Reconstruction Effort, But Why?**

The man who did supposedly have a plan was retired general Jay Garner, appointed by the administration to lead the Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance. Moving to Baghdad on April 19<sup>th</sup> with what could be considered a less than prepared team of colleagues, Garner immediately set out to accomplish what the army was not: restoring essential aspects of Iraqi society that had been dismantled by war. Namely, 'those initiatives like fix the fuel crisis; improve security; bring the ministries to a functioning level...reestablish the food distribution program...a major effort to begin

rapidly improve things (Ferguson, 91). Not only did Garner work to jumpstart these aspects, but he also had an interest in using Iraqi businesses to do it. Such a process would result in the long-term establishment of a middle class, the backbone of any functional democracy, and a prerequisite for accomplishing such in Iraq. Unfortunately for Garner, individuals within the administration did not like this aspect of his reconstruction efforts, nor the manner in which he was conducting the rest of his duties. Although it was planned from the beginning of the invasion that Garner would eventually be replaced by an official with the permanent responsibility of reconstructing Iraq, why the former general was removed so promptly is widely speculated.

American corporations, for one, would stand to lose much of the potential profit that could be generated from rebuilding Iraq and that Garner wanted to see support a middle class. In addition, Garner considered Chalabi, the golden boy of the administration's government reconstruction effort, an untrustworthy ruffian. Specifically, at a conference in Nasiriya, "Chalabi stayed away, but he did meet with Garner that night. 'He and I immediately didn't get along,' Garner said. 'I thought he was a thug. I thought he was greasy.'" (Roston, 255) Furthermore, those concerned with the quick removal of Saddam and individuals comprising his regime were not satisfied with the slow but careful rate at which Garner was removing the old elite. "The pentagon leadership and ambitious émigrés such as Chalabi preferred a broad, deep purge of everyone and everything connected with Saddam Hussein, the Baath Party, and the former regime" (Ferguson, 148). Although he was being as detailed and careful as possible in his duties, a manner that surely despite its time requirements would have ensured better social stability, caution of duty was not a high priority for some within the administration. The

neoconservatives, mainly concerned with dismantling all threats to nearby Israel, favored a much broader removal of Baath party members and the military over a careful combing through of these institutions to ensure stability. Accordingly, they viewed Garner's caution as an impediment to the realization of their goal. When conducting interviews for his well-known analysis of the War, Charles Ferguson ran into individuals who expressed this sentiment: "A number of people I interviewed...faulted Garner for his lack of forcefulness, his limited managerial and political skills, and his failure to understand the enormity and urgency of the problems he faced" (Ferguson, 142). Therefore, those who interpreted Garner's attention to detail as neglect of urgency to adhere to their underlying interests opted to replace him with a more like-minded individual.

Their choice, Paul Bremer, took over as the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, the remnants of the ORHA. Leading the CPA, Bremer made a series of unimaginably damaging policy decisions that Garner and even some within the administration were appalled by. Making these terrible choices most likely arose out of Bremer's complete lack of qualification for the position and pressures from the special interests that hired him. He had no military experience, did not speak Arabic, had never worked in the Middle East, had never aided a reconstructive effort, and was never responsible for managing a large logistical operation. Pulled from a position as the CEO of Marsh Crisis Consulting, a crisis management entity within an insurance company, Bremer had previously worked as the Coordinator for Counter Terrorism under Ronald Reagan, was the Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorism, and had worked for Henry Kissinger's famous Kissinger and Associates. A highly decorated Foreign Service officer by the State Department, Bremer certainly had an impressive resume. Although

“the reasons for Garner’s sudden replacement by Paul Bremer, and the circumstances surrounding it, have never been completely explained”, there is conjecture that Bremer was chosen not so much his qualifications, but for his connections to religious, corporate, and political entities within the administration (Ferguson, 141).

Having converted to an extremely conservative sect of Catholicism through the insistence of his wife, perhaps Bremer offered to the administration some moral ease much as Bush’s appointments of Supreme Court Justices John Roberts Jr. and Samuel Alito followed the same trend. Furthermore, it is conceivable that Bremer’s experiences as both the head of a crisis management firm and a Managing Director at Kissinger and Associates signaled to the administration that he was part of the business “elite”. Such a characterization would place him in the same likeminded group that Bush, the creator of several small oil exploration companies, Cheney, former CEO of Halliburton, Rumsfeld, former CEO of General Instrument, and others within the administration were part of.

As CEO of his crisis management firm within the insurance company Marsh and McLennan, Bremer specialized in a new service called “terrorism risk insurance”. Immediately following 9/11, Bremer’s company began to sell insurance specifically designed to fit the needs of companies at risk of being targeted by acts of terrorism.

In a November 2001 policy paper entitled ‘New Risks in International Business,’ he explains that free-trade policies ‘require laying off workers.

And opening markets to foreign trade puts enormous pressure on traditional retailers and trade monopolies.’ This leads to ‘growing income gaps and social tensions,’ which in turn can lead to a range of attacks on US firms...’ (Scahill, 83).

In principle then, Bremer was profiting off of the tragic events of 9/11 and the wars that Bush was launching as a result of them. It can be argued from a more pessimistic standpoint that it was for this reason, mainly his understanding of the profit incentives

involving the war, that individuals within the Bush administration recognized his usefulness in supplying Iraqi contracts to corporate connections without hassle. Garner or others like him, who were in favor of giving such contracts to Iraqi companies would never have been so willing to divvy out the amount of no-bid contracts to massive American corporations immediately following the fall of Baghdad. This may explain why it was Dick Cheney, the most well known and connected corporate CEO in the administration, who had his Chief of Staff Lewis Libby call Bremer initially about taking the job as head of Iraqi reconstruction.

Bremer's political ties, however, were most likely the final determinant in his selection to head the CPA. His past role as Coordinator for Counterterrorism and 1999 appointment as the Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorism may have provided the administration with confidence that Bremer had the right contacts and knowledge to lead a successful reconstruction effort. As Chairman of the National Commission on Terrorism, Bremer produced a report in June of 2000 which, among other things, suggested that America become actively engaged in removing terrorist threats around the world with military force (*Report of the National Commission on Terrorism*). For the administration, an official with this much conviction towards the elimination of international terrorism must have seemed like a great partner in their crusade to use the threat of terrorism as justification for invading Iraq. When all three of these aspects, religious, corporate, and political are taken into consideration, however, it is clearer why Bush and his peers elected Bremer over a more obvious choice such as a military leader or experienced reconstruction expert. In combination, the three facets



made Bremer a pliable official with a similar ideology and an understanding of the Bush philosophy.

### **Bremer's Rocky Tenure Begins- CPA Order 1 and 2**

Accordingly, when Bremer took over he immediately set out to satisfy the first priority of the Bush Administration, namely the removal of Saddam's political allies, the Baathists. Instead of slowly sifting through ministries and organizations to purge the most fervent and influential members of the party, Bremer instead chose a complete removal of a deep segment of the party's membership. CPA Order Number 1:

‘Senior Party Members’, it stated, ‘are hereby removed from their positions and banned from future employment in the public sector.’ In addition, anyone holding a position in the top three management layers of any ministry, government-run corporation, university, or hospital and who was a party member-even of a junior rank-would be deemed to be a senior Baathist and so would be fired (Ricks, 159).

The repercussions of this decision were felt by the American occupation until it withdrew by order of president Obama. By removing such a deep level of party members, a large portion of the 60% of the Iraqi workforce with a job in the government was thrown on the streets and banned from returning to employment. Undoubtedly some employees were loyal to Saddam and deeply resented American intervention. However, a considerable percentage of those exiled from employment were individuals who had attached themselves to the party for the sole purpose of retaining a job under Baathist rule and happened to be indispensable assets to a smoothly running Iraqi state regardless of political affiliation. Accordingly, CPA Order Number 1 created not only a sizeable population of estranged Iraqis perturbed with an American occupation that was now viewed as hostile to the interests of common citizens, but also a gutted government

bureaucracy with an insufficient number of workers. Ministries absolutely crucial to the upkeep of Iraqi society and day-to-day logistics were wiped clean, leaving no framework for the continuation of a functional society. “He [Bremer] showed them the de-Baathification order. ‘They [CPA employees] went nuts and said, ‘You cant do this,’” recalled Gardner, the Army colonel assigned to CPA. ‘It just cleaned out the ministries. The guys said,’ we cant run our ministries now’” (Ricks, 162). Garbage began to collect in the streets, power outages were rampant, and running water became a luxury.

To be fair, the implementation of the order went far beyond what was envisioned by its creators. On the one hand, Bremer was aiming to remove those individuals with very close ties to Saddam’s regime. However, putting Ahmed Chalabi, a known enemy of everything Baathist, in charge of carrying out the order was not the proper way to execute an efficient cleanse of potentially harmful political figures. It would seem then that the effectiveness of Order Number 1 was lost with an unnecessary level of deepness and a less than suited manager. What resulted was abuse on a massive scale through which the estimated 35,000 Iraqis that would have been left without a job according to the original order was increased to a staggering 100,000 or more (Ferguson, 156). Political cleansing on this scale had not even taken place during the De-Nazification era following World

War II. Robert Hutchings, Chairman of the National Intelligence Council noted:

De-Nazification was a very liberal approach toward officials of the former Nazi regime, most of whom were welcomed back into participation in the political life of the new Germany...De-Baathification, which seemed to be drawing on that same historical source, was much more restrictive. It was basically to try to exclude from political life anybody who had had any reasonable, or any deep association with the Baathist regime-a big mistake, in my view... (Ferguson, 154).

According to Bremer's own account in his book My Year in Iraq, he was only slightly concerned with the possible effects that deep debaathification would cause, "comforted by the knowledge that apolitical technocrats were usually the people who made organizations work" (Bremer, 40). Bremer's comforting knowledge, however, was far from reality as thousands of former party members left their offices, roamed the streets, and through their absence disabled many crucial ministries further setting back the effort of rebuilding an Iraqi government.

What made matters worse was the inability for ex-party members to feed their families, a reality that not only scarred their pride, an important Iraqi sentiment, but also increased the ease at which they could be lured into the insurgency through promise of essential resources. With no other means to support their relatives, Iraqis could use their military training, which all men were required to partake in as citizens, against American forces that roamed the streets daily. For those groups with a clear goal to injure and kill as many soldiers as possible, these disgruntled ex-party members were attractive targets for insurgency recruiting. "Some 70 per cent of the labor force or twelve million people out of a population of twenty-five million in 2003 were unemployed, according to the Ministry of Labor" (Cockburn, 2006, 71). What added the most danger to this large number of discontented citizens, however, were not those linked to the Baathist party, but the military.

Close to one out of every twelve citizens that was removed from his job was a soldier relieved of his duty under CPA Order Number 2, which in a massive sweep dissolved the military and its various branches including the intelligence service, security agencies, and ministries of information. Compared to their civilian counterparts working

for the Baathist regime, however, these men had access to military weaponry, which in turn they could disseminate to insurgents. Distraught citizens' willingness to do this could not have been more apparent as mass protests formed shortly after the culmination of both CPA orders and threats to the American presence were broadcasted on national news.

On January 18 an estimated two thousand Iraqi soldiers gathered outside the Green Zone to denounce the dissolution decision.... 'We will take up arms,' Tahseen Ali Husein vowed in a speech to the demonstrators, according to an account by Agence France Presse. 'We are very well trained soldiers and we are armed. We will start ambushes, bombings and even suicide bombings. We will not let the Americans rule us in such a humiliating way' (Ricks, 164).

It can be said that with the passing of these two orders, the insurgency was essentially birthed out of the frustrations and embarrassment of the Iraqi population. The lack of foresight that Bremer possessed in drafting these orders could not have been more detrimental to the long-term goals of American interests in Iraq. Individuals within the administration, despite their initial trust in Bremer, began to question the effectiveness of these policies. Many had hoped to engage the Iraqi military in some way while attempting to rebuild the state, not totally remove it from the equation. Garner had even planned to use the military for tasks that simply required manpower such as clearing garbage from the streets, reestablishing drainage systems damaged during the invasion, etc. Its use could have shortened the load on American military personnel who were already engaged in various other reconstruction activities. Instead, Bremer saw Iraqi soldiers, especially the officer corps, as an ideological and physical threat to rebuilding a democratic Iraq. Perhaps not by chance, neoconservatives were

Any official with knowledge of the Iraqi army, however, could have told Bremer that dissolving the military out of the desire to purge loyalists of the previous regime was unnecessary due to the largely individual nature of the organization. Saddam had even been sure to keep the army removed from areas surrounding Baghdad out of fear that they would overthrow him through a coup. Nevertheless, for his part, Bremer thought he was making the best decision for moving the process of rebuilding Iraq forward. In his memoir Bremer notes that the wholesale dissolution of the army and crippling slow reintegration of individually approved soldiers was “the only option we had” (Bremer, 58). A closer look at the situation on the ground before the war and even immediately after the invasion ended would have revealed to Bremer that he actually had a plethora of options. Following the invasion “the U.S. military found personnel records that listed which officers were members of the Baath Party and which were not. The records confirmed that Bremer had been wrong in his presumption that the entire office corps...was Baathist (Ferguson, 176). Even taking note of the fact that much of the Iraqi military had gone home during the American invasion, Bremer could have obtained the notion that it was not an extensive threat. Why then, Bremer made these fateful decisions is worthy of investigation.

### **Bremer on a Personal Level-Fit to be a Leader?**

On a personal level, many who worked with Paul Bremer noted his distinctive strangeness and almost anti-social tendencies. From reading his account of time spent in Iraq, one gets the clear sense that Bremer is a man of intense purpose, a trait that could have made him seem distant or aloof to his peers. Many times in his book he tells

anecdotes of visiting certain Iraqi citizens and the pride he would cherish from their thanks. Even the detail to which the account itself is written lends a sense that Bremer wanted no feature of his efforts untold as a testament to the significance of the endeavor that he was a part of. That may be his own view, but for others who witnessed Bremer during demanding times, his inability to handle the increasingly important but equally stressful job of rebuilding Iraq was apparent.

Nor did Bremer lead his people in such a way as to help them confront the organization's flaws. His morning meetings in the summer and fall of 2003, as Iraq descended into guerrilla war, "were bizarre," recalled Gardener, one of the Army colonels at the CPA. "You'd go around the table. He'd say, 'Anybody got anything?' Most of the time it was 'nope,' 'nope,' 'got nothing'" (Ricks, 2005).

As good of a job that Bremer wished to do, he possessed neither the natural leadership nor technical skill-set required for completing such a massive task. In a similar circumstance, no matter how badly an uneducated man would want to perform open-heart surgery, desire and perseverance is not enough in the face of such a technically complex undertaking. For Bremer, while he was not operating on a human heart, he was in fact working to revive the life-force of a nation with obvious needs. His inability to satisfy these needs, and instead fuel their suffering through a series of miscalculated policy decisions could have very well been the end of Iraq's possible ascent to democracy.

It is apparent from his personal account of the events in Iraq and those that worked closely with him that Bremer gave everything he had to his job of reconstructing Iraq. His time and energy, however, were expended upon projects that were not necessarily the most crucial for quickly stabilizing the country after the fall of Baghdad.

Bremer's education advisors went through textbooks line by line to determine what should be expunged. His healthcare team studied every single prescription medicine used by Iraq's Health Ministry. American

attorneys drafted a new traffic code and revised Iraq's laws governing everything from patents to industrial design (Chandrasekaran, 39).

As busy as this made the reconstruction effort seem, the scale of vision was on such a micro level that the larger and more important societal issues that had to be addressed immediately were left unexamined. It was as if Bremer and his team believed a bottom up approach was more effective than a large-scale top down style where the small details of stably established institutions could be worked out much later in the process. Such narrow-mindedness had a clearly negative influence on Iraq's birthing democracy.

### **A Slow Start for Democracy**

What had the most impact on this expected formation of a democracy, however, was Bremer's insistence of derailing Garner's plan to establish an Iraqi Interim government. On the behest of many nation building experts, Garner had hoped to implement a plan that would give the Iraqis a major role in initial policy making, establish a clear timeline for constructing a functioning democracy, and keep power out of the hands of miscreants like Chalabi. Unfortunately, when Bremer assumed power his initial step to securing democracy was to establish a powerless body called the Iraqi Governing Council. The title says very little about the actual role this council played in the initial stages of the post-war phase. Instead of making essential decisions for the development of the new Iraqi society, this council was a mere charade created by Bremer in response to pressure from Iraqis who wanted a say in America's effort to rebuild Iraq.

[The CPA] failed to encourage the Governing Council members to reach out and develop constituencies. During its tenure, it was not uncommon for the majority of the council to be out of the country at any given time.

Most Iraqis never saw any of the council members. As a group, the Governing Council did not distinguish itself (Diamond, 2005, 46).

It should be no surprise that Chalabi was positioned as head of the Governing Council by Bremer's CPA, and from that point forth only lost popularity amongst the Iraqi population. Accused of fraud and grand theft of Iraqi assets over the coming months, Chalabi's fall from grace also included a fallout with American officials who went as far as accusing him of selling U.S. secrets to Iran in 2004 about a broken Iranian code. Despite these shortcomings Chalabi was able become Deputy Prime Minister in April of 2005, only to be replaced the next month. Including the poor choice to appoint Chalabi as an integral part of the new Iraq, the net result of Bremer's decisions was a change from Garner's initial plan of quickly handing over power to a selection of capable Iraqi leaders to launching a long-term occupation with little future prospects of handing over authority. In addition to squelching the broader attempts at democratization, Bremer also canceled local elections in key cities around Iraq causing Iraqis initially supportive of the American invasion to question the goals of the operation. Promises made by American leaders of a democratic Iraq with ample opportunity for citizen involvement were, in the eyes of Iraqis, being liquidated by Bremer's change in policy.

Why exactly Bremer chose to dissolve his predecessors plans for quickly establishing a formal democracy is open for debate. Observers sensitive to neoconservative influence could argue that Bremer's actions account for the continuation of an ideology that an unstable Iraq is an Iraq incapable of action against Israel. This could be the same reasoning used to determine the justification for quickly disbanding the army. In both matters, by limiting the country's development, Bremer was delaying the possibility of another Iraqi regime with Israel in its crosshairs. Furthermore, by keeping Iraq under occupation, he was extending the duration of time in which private



corporations were needed to keep the peace and help develop infrastructure. This would improve the return on investment for those who pushed to intervene in Iraq for profit, the same individuals who selected Bremer to run reconstruction. Whatever the reasoning for this anti-democratic policy, it seemed counterproductive to the overall mission in Iraq, a theme that reverberated through much of Bremer's tenure.

Failure to set up at least a cursory framework for democracy in Iraq at this stage in post-war development laid the foundation for the sectarian violence that continues to plague the political landscape. Insensitivity to the cultural distinctions between religious groups in the representation of a democratic system fueled continuing bloodshed that made headlines years after the "mission accomplished" milestone. Charles Ferguson detailed the situation in Iraq at the time of his famous documentary *No End in Sight*:

Three rival Shiite militias and political parties are struggling for control of the south; the Mahdi Army is fighting Sunni militias, al Qaeda, and sometimes the United States for control of Baghdad; secular or nationalist Sunni groups are fighting with al Qaeda in Iraq and foreign fundamentalists for control of Sunni regions; and the Kurds are fighting with Arabs for control of Kirkuk and its oil resources (Ferguson, 410).

Such an environment is very different from what some experts envisioned during the pre-war stages of the operation. Adeed Dawisha and Karen Dawisha, writing a few months after the invasion began, noted in *Foreign Affairs*:

Iraq's ethnic and sectarian diversity...is usually seen as an impediment to building a stable democracy there. The fact is, however, that all this antagonism could serve a constructive purpose: having factions zealously check each others' power could actually promote democracy at the expense of rigid communal particularism (Dawisha and Dawisha, 37).

Obviously for such a scenario to take hold, effort would have had to been exerted very early in the post-war phase for erecting a stable constitutional base able to withstand the pressures of sectarian dispute.

The resulting violence from a misunderstanding of the cultural dynamics within Iraq was a major contributor to the destabilization of democratization efforts. As Bremer's team continually ceded more power to the Iraqis through the Governing Council, Iraqi Interim Government, Iraqi Transitional Government, and eventually the Al Maliki regime, the monopoly on violence still remained in the hands of the sectarian insurgents. "The primary requirement of a state is that it hold a monopoly on the use of violence. By that measure, the body that the United States transferred power to in Baghdad on June 28 may have been a government-but it was not a state" (Diamond, 2005, 38). By failing to secure a safe and violence free Iraq, may have been an impossible goal, the military was blamed by many, along with the CPA, for Iraq's initial democratic failures.

### **The Military's Role in Post-War Failure**

Although Bremer may be the public scapegoat for the larger policy issues of rebuilding Iraqi society, individual bureaucracies should be allotted blame for much of the daily damage that was done to not only the quality of life for average Iraqis, but also to America's reputation amongst the citizens of Iraq. The military for one did not operate with an awareness of the effects that its movements and operations had on the populace. More concerned with "security patrols" and "keeping the peace" than the reconstruction of crucial aspects of society, American soldiers after the fall of Baghdad were a constant reminder to Iraqi citizens that their country was being occupied by a foreign force with no apparent intention of helping them. Rajiv Chandrasekaran of the Washington Post explained the military's relationship with the CPA that can be cited as the source of

pressure to carry out such damaging patrols: “Soldiers...blamed civilians for not rebuilding the country quickly enough to pacify the country, while civilians...blamed the military for not providing enough security to enable the rebuilding” (Ricks, 212). In other words, the perceived role of the military was to establish a safe Iraq, while that of the CPA was to rebuild and transform the country; two distinct functions instead of a collaborated reconstruction effort.

Overarching the shaky relationship between the CPA and the military was an uncertainty about the exact goal of America’s intervention in Iraq amongst post-war operatives. On one side was the CPA concerned with the more culturally relevant aspects of Iraqi society, that is the transformation of institutions in a manner that would support the establishment of a democracy. Then there was the military whose main concern revolved around the concept of security and establishing an environment free from violence. Unfortunately these tasks sometimes conflicted as Iraqi discontent with CPA policies, or lack thereof, created security risks for the military, and the inability to pacify certain areas of the country made it impossible for the CPA to conduct business there. This misalignment of priorities resulted in the notably slow progress of both bureaucracies, and their inability to make progress with available resources.

In addition, because both the military and CPA were striving towards different ends, their reports about the progress in Iraq diverged from the singular message that would be expected from a collaborative effort. As expected, military officials would comment about progress or pitfalls on the security front, making known the status of defense operations and their effectiveness in curbing violence. Officials from the CPA, accordingly, discussed the progress or pitfalls of its endeavors in rebuilding societal

infrastructure. Mixed messages then were not uncommon with one organization reporting signs of positive momentum while the other detailed an unproductive environment, and vice versa. All things considered, it can be argued that the relationship between the military and the CPA was more destructive than helpful as it not only prevented the accomplishment of crucial objectives, but also created a tense atmosphere in the reconstruction environment.

At the heart of the confusion between the CPA and military was the unhealthy relationship between each body's acting heads, Bremer and Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, respectively. Although in his account of the war Bremer lays no criticism on Sanchez, it was clear to those working with the duo on the reconstruction effort that the two were not fond of each other. Sanchez, similar to Bremer, was less than qualified for his role as the Commander for coalition ground forces in Iraq, compounding the issue. A rags to riches story, Sanchez used the military as a vehicle to success rising out of the Mexican slums in Texas. Unfortunately his rise to the top of the military's ladder is noted by some as being a perfect example of the "Peter Principle" where an employee of a massive bureaucracy rises to the limits of his or her capabilities and thus functions with a level of incompetence. Sanchez was praised by many within the military for his aptitude in leading at the division level, but making the giant leap to commander of an entire ground force was too large an undertaking. Never before in history had a three star general been given so much power in wartime, and the precedent in Iraq was a good an example of why. In carrying out his duties, Sanchez erred on the side of detail, handling the administration of an entire ground force more like a few thousand. Instead of focusing on macro issues such as the impact of troop presence on the Iraqi populace, Sanchez would

often direct his attention toward the metaphorical trees amongst the forest, a problem he shared with Bremer.

Why then was such an unprepared commander selected to lead the military at such a vital point of reconstruction? The answer lies with the apparent exodus of military leadership sometime prior to, and immediately following the collapse of Baghdad. Mainly discontented with the policies and lack of planning on behalf of the administration, a plethora of top brass distanced and eventually removed themselves from the pool of qualified individuals suited to command post-war ground forces. General Tommy Franks, Commander of Central Command, having endured endless pressure from Rumsfeld on Iraq particulars planned to retire immediately following the end of major military action. General Henry Shelton, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had retired directly after September 11<sup>th</sup> on account of differences with Rumsfeld's policy. General Shinseki, Chief of the Army who had fought tirelessly against the limited troop strategies of Rumsfeld and Wolfowitz left his position close to the time of Franks.

In addition, instead of having Iraq run by Gen. McKiernan and his staff at CFLCC, the headquarters for the ground invasion force, the staff of V Corps, a smaller group, was going to be put in charge. This meant that an experienced team that had worked for months on Iraq issues was being replaced by a smaller, less capable, and less seasoned staff (Ricks, 157).

Sanchez, who headed the V Corps, was seen as McKiernan as a second rate choice and was baffled by the switch in leadership. McKiernan had led all coalition ground forces during the initial attacks on Saddam's Iraq, and to now be replaced by a less experienced officer at a crucial point signaled more than opportunistic error by the administration. With many senior leaders removed or relocated from power, lesser-known military officers were answering the call of their administration. It can be argued that the

modifications being made in the military leadership were part of a “changing of the guard” where dissenting opinions were replaced with compatible ideologies. Experience was not a perquisite to being considered a part of the new wave of leadership, only a lack of opposition in response to the policies of the Bush White House.

Although there may have been no issue with Sanchez leaving after his appointment, there was however much evidence of struggle between him and Bremer as heads of two separate bodies trying to reestablish a stable Iraq. In fact, many who worked among the two labeled their relationship more as one of extreme distaste. One official on Collin Powell’s staff, Lawrence Wilkerson remarked about the duo, “Now, I don’t know whether it was as strident as they hated each other, but they didn’t talk to each other. So there definitely was not unity of command, which is... in the military a principle...of doing anything” (Ferguson, 294). As a result there was the noted confusion about bureaucratic roles causing the seemingly slow, and at some times, backwards progression at the start of reconstruction. For example:

In the autumn of 2003, Sanchez assigned 24 military engineers to help increase Iraq’s electricity production. The engineers were sent to power stations across the country and told to work with the plant managers to conduct a detailed assessment of what repairs could be made to increase output. The military engineers helped add hundreds of additional megawatts to Iraq’s power grid. But, after two months, the troop-strapped Sanchez ordered the engineers to report back to their original units, depriving the CPA of an on-site taskmaster and a reliable way to communicate with each plant (Chandrasekaran, 40).

Although well intentioned, the inability of both sides to effectively coordinate with each other, stemming from, at least in small part, the relationship between their leaders, led to a less than productive reconstruction environment.

The immobility of progress and unclear responsibilities caused the military to operate according to its own devices, doing the one job its members were trained to do, mainly eliminate threats to personnel. This may have been the most logical objective for securing the survival of its soldiers, but the selfishness of this close-minded approach negated the importance of treading lightly while completing this task. Little notice was given to the consequences of forcefully patrolling foreign streets in search of enemy combatants. Farmers in Iraq told journalists interested in these effects “that US soldiers driving bulldozers and with jazz blaring from loudspeakers had destroyed orchards as part of a new policy of collective punishment of farmers who did not give information about guerrillas attacking US troops” after major hostilities had ended (Cockburn, 2006, 125). Blame for not controlling his forces can be allocated to General Sanchez, but it is hard not to consider Bremer’s role in the failure to reestablish a respectable level of infrastructure as well.

In the face of the military’s shortcomings, however, there were gleams of hope that brightened the gloom of negative operational effects on the Iraqi population. General Petraeus, for one, as Major General of the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division, was known within the American military and even Iraq’s society as a generous leader willing to make sacrifices for the betterment of the Iraqi people. For example, Petraeus was instrumental in rebuilding and reopening the University of Mosul, located in a city that saw much of the General’s commendable humanitarian tactics. When Bremer issues CPA Orders 1 and 2, knowing the damage they would cause to the municipalities under his control Petraeus went against Bremer and created his own policies.

Instead of telling former Baathists to fend for themselves, Petraeus created job programs to employ them, reasoning that keeping them at work would

dissuade them from becoming insurgents. Instead of following Bremer's rules, which required appeals of firings to be submitted to a review board run by the controversial former exile Ahmad Chalabi, Petraeus allowed local leaders to grant exemptions (Chandrasekaran, 37).

Although he was directly violating the procedures of the CPA, Petraeus was doing a better job at keeping Iraqis happy, preventing the growth of an insurgency, and moving ahead with the legitimization of local authority that could potentially lead to the creation of a democratic governmental system. Petraeus was operating then, in a manner that was much more similar to what pre-war experts had said would have to be the policies of reconstruction officials in order to ensure a stable reconstruction in Iraq. Unfortunately, Petraeus' insight to break away from the "good soldier" attitude and do what was right for Iraqis was not shared by the military as a whole, which found it much easier to just follow orders.

### **Privatized Reconstruction**

According to much of the pre-war analysis done by non-government and government organizations about what needed to happen on the ground in Iraq immediately after the fall of Baghdad in order to secure a high-quality foundation for a working state, basic necessities such as running water and electricity topped many lists. One of the many things that were overlooked, however, was this fact, and resulted in the continued snowballing of Iraqi grievances. America, the great power of the world was viewed as many Iraqis before the war as capable of anything. Now in their streets with advanced technology and capabilities beyond any Iraqi's dreams, Americans were viewed as failing to complete even the simplest of tasks. Much like residents of New Orleans, Louisiana would find out two years later, the Iraqis discovered that



bureaucracies in the United States were far more inept and corrupt than originally conceived. Tasked with the job of rebuilding Iraq, which included basic services, Bremer commented on the trouble he faced in doing so: ‘the plan erred in projecting what would happen after Hussein’s demise, and focused on preparing for humanitarian relief and widespread refugee problems rather than the bloody insurgency war now being waged...’ (Chehab, 98). Nevertheless, even without an insurgency, it would be highly doubtful that a better response would have been a result of the poorly organized American effort to rebuild Iraq. The troop levels during the invasion may have been efficient for toppling a regime, but for bringing a country back to a decent standard of living they were extremely low. Of course, this was a reflection on the lack of planning by Rumsfeld who was extremely concerned with putting on a public display of his new aged “light” war. To make do with whatever troops were available then, Bremer would have had to coordinate with General Sanchez, a synchronization that as shown never occurred. Regardless, while the military had its hands tied behind its back carrying out patrols and security missions, almost no manpower was leftover for reconstruction activities. In addition, Iraqi citizens who could have aided in supplying basic services were largely discredited and removed from consideration through CPA Orders 1 and 2 on Bremer’s behalf.

Reliance, therefore, was placed on private companies into which the government poured billions of dollars to achieve a sustainable standard of living for Iraqis. Not much had been done after the first Gulf War to reestablish the infrastructure of Iraq, making the reconstruction job a much more daunting task when combined with the additional damage caused by the recent invasion. The CPA, which managed much of the reconstruction spending, by July of 2003 had already committed over “\$1 billion to

several thousand projects” to repair and improve basic infrastructure, including \$314 million to upgrade the electricity system” (Masci, *Rebuilding Iraq*). On a longer timeline, by 2006 the government was regularly awarding millions of dollars to private companies for various reconstruction projects ranging from the repair of oil infrastructure to establishing a working water treatment system. Flour AMEC LLC, for example, was awarded a \$1 billion contract to establish water and sewer systems, similar to Bechtel, an Engineering firm which was awarded a \$2.4 billion contract for constructing new infrastructure in the wake of the war (SIGIR Report to Congress July 30, 2006 Appendix H). Money for these efforts was raised through the Iraq Relief and Construction Fund, which was established by congress as an \$18.4 billion pool for reconstruction needs.

Despite the presence of massive available funds, little seemed to get accomplished on the ground as rumors of corruption spread and the average Iraqi experienced little change in his or her standard of living. “Custer Battles, for example, a startup military provider firm that was featured on the front page of the *Wall Street Journal* in August 2004 has since been accused of running a fraudulent scheme of subsidiaries and false charges (Singer, 124). On the one hand, administration officials were handing out contracts on a sole-source cost-plus basis, or in other words non-competitive and paid on a percentage of what each company was spending. This translated into the handing over of blank checks to familiar companies with connections within the White House such as Cheney’s Halliburton and KBR. The setup, in effect, gives companies more profit if they spend more. When combined with inadequate oversight, it creates a system ripe for inefficiency and abuse (Singer, 131). Indeed, supervision of the IRCF was fairly limited, so much so that an Iraqi defense minister was able to run away to London with \$1 billion

of the much-needed capital. On top of the mismanagement, what was spent on reconstruction had little effect on infrastructure:

Before the overthrow of Saddam Hussein 50 per cent of Iraqis had access to drinkable water, but this figure had dropped to 32 per cent by the end of 2005. Some \$4 billion was spent by the US and Iraqi governments on increasing the electricity supply but on April 2006 this fell to 4,100 megawatts, below pre-invasion levels, which represented half of the 8,000 megawatts needed by Iraq (Cockburn, 2006, 5).

Bremer's handling of the situation, therefore can be considered less than adequate as the necessary means to accomplish a simple goal were present, yet little to no progress was made. Selfish corporate interests, however, did not help the process.

Cheney's Halliburton and KBR in fact committed one of the most public abuses of the IRCF. Investigated by the FBI in a massive auditing effort to track their expenses as the largest recipients of government funds, a lush history of monetary neglect and poor record keeping by the companies lent much to those wondering why the situation in Iraq was not changing. Ex Air Force Captain Stuart Bowden was selected as the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction whose main function was to keep track of the over \$18 billion being spent for rebuilding Iraqi infrastructure. Appointed by Bush, whose 1994 campaign for governor he had been a part of, Bowden was expected to be a less than effective inspector. However, he pushed the issue on investigating Halliburton and KBR, leading the charge against budgetary abuse. "One SIGIR report, used in July 2004, faulted Halliburton/KBR for not being able to locate a third of its assets in Iraq. An audit of the 20,531 items valued at \$61.1 million that they were in charge of showed that they could not locate 34 percent of randomly selected sample objects including a giant generator costing: \$734, 863" (Chatterjee, 198). Such large-scale misuse of the IRCF was

an example of what happened when the thirst for profits proved to be stronger than the desire to follow through with what had to be done to make a better Iraq.

Halliburton, which was extensively involved in the restoration of Iraqi oil infrastructure after years of war, may have been skimping on repairs and carrying out its contracts lackadaisically in an effort to limit the flow of oil. This would keep the commodity's price stabilized and prevent sudden fluctuations that could be detrimental to oil companies. Unfortunately, oil sold as a result of repairs done by Halliburton and others could have funded more reconstruction projects that Iraq was obviously in great need of. Other lapses in performance, however, can simply be attested to the lack of care for the state of Iraq. The main motivation for the corporate world is money, and after being awarded lucrative no-bid cost-plus contracts without any oversight there is little motivation to produce anything but a less than satisfactory job.

While Halliburton and KBR may be the example of monetary abuse in the reconstruction sector, Blackwater is by far the most notable failure in the Iraq security sector. Given no-bid contracts much like Halliburton for duties such as security detail for U.S. officials, supporting the American military within the streets of Iraq, and a wide variety relating keeping the peace, Blackwater was mainly employed to fill the personnel vacuum created by Rumsfeld's insistence on a "light" war. Although focused on different objectives than its contracting peers, the company operated with the same profit centralized ideology as Halliburton that put making as much money as possible above the care and needs of the citizens the company's work would affect. While a poor job repairing oil fields surely had an impact on the public, Blackwater's highly armed and dangerous employees provided for much more serious consequences upon a decent into

careless behavior. Operating separately from military and government control, private security contractors such as those from Blackwater were free to act in any manner that effectively helped them achieve their objective, adding further to their dangerous potential. Late in the war Blackwater guards killed seventeen innocent and unarmed civilians in Baghdad during an operation sparking massive protest from within Iraq and domestically. Although Blackwater's CEO eventually testified in front of a congressional oversight committee that eventually resulted in all private military contractors being deemed liable to U.S. law, the abuses by Blackwater contractors caused irrefutable damage to the post-war effort in Iraq.

Because they considered themselves above the law, Blackwater employees operated in a manner that could be considered less than professional. "They bossed around journalists, and ran Iraqi cars off the road or fired rounds at cars if they got in the way of a Blackwater convoy" (Scahill, 71). Such behavior not only endangered uniformed personnel on the ground as Iraqi tempers raged, but also detracted from the overall goal of establishing a safe and secure environment. Combined with the damaging effects of Bremer's CPA policies, security contractors added to the toxic concoction of anti-American sentiments that eventually brewed into a full-blown insurgency.

The contractors, however, did more than affect the situation in Iraq. Their widespread use in the conflict has forever altered the dynamic of the American military. No longer are the armed forces the sole institution capable of solving this nation's wartime needs. Instead, the ability to respond to military requests from the government has become a commodity on the open market.

The armed services have long seen themselves as engaged in a unique profession, set apart from the rest of civilian society, which they are

entrusted with securing. The introduction of PMFs (private military firms), and their recruiting from within the military itself, challenges that uniqueness; the military's professional identity and monopoly on certain activities is being encroached on by the regular civilian marketplace (Singer, 128).

This mutation in the historical role of America's armed forces has not only undermined its future growth prospects, but also the potential success that could have taken place in Iraqi reconstruction. By operating as a test-run for this new way of waging war, Iraq suffered from the effects of an untested system of private combat and was deprived the abundance of American military personnel that could have completed a stable reconstruction. America itself has also been deprived of the necessary accountability standards for accurately judging the effectiveness of such privatized activities. Contracts divvied out to private military firms are legally not subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. As the legal scholar Arthur S. Miller once wrote, "democratic government is responsible government-which means accountable government-and the essential problem in contracting out is that responsibility and accountability are greatly diminished" (Singer, 126). By allowing private military firms to remain unbound from closer inspection, the government cast a dark shadow over its activities in post-war Iraq, inviting future investigation that will bring about further criticism.

The defects of the post-war effort came in many forms but at the broadest level they collectively represented a failure to do what was best for Iraq. Instead of actively pursuing policy that would help create a strong and stable beacon of democracy in the Middle East, selfish interests that derived from the breadth of a corrupt administration kept Iraq unbalanced to serve as a cash cow. As tensions escalated, however, it was impossible to keep the snowballing force of the Iraqi insurgency at bay, resulting in a

complete breakdown of control and an eventual resumption of major military activity.

What should be most depressing about the post-war environment was the ignorance of available policies through which Iraq could have been transformed into a formidable example of nation building. The obscene polarity between what experts had said needed to be accomplished, and what actually occurred provides a perfect example for future generations who, in the face of great tragedy, must push aside their emotions and continue to hold their elected representatives to the honorable and wholehearted standards through which this country's foreign policy should be conducted.

### **Conclusion**

America's failure to quickly and efficiently accomplish its goals in Iraq of establishing a functional democracy after the invasion, creating a friendly partnership with the populace it liberated from the clutches of Saddam Hussein, and setting an example of intolerance for international terrorism by crushing one of its bastions, should be apparent. If operations in Iraq had been a success, the country would now be a symbol of democracy in the Middle East, functioning without corruption and violence through a system that ensures the representation of the various ethnic groups that makeup its populace. Instead on June 29, 2009 when president Bush began to remove American forces from Iraq, fireworks littered the skyline as citizens and insurgents alike rejoiced that the nation that had brought their country so much turmoil was finally detaching itself from their affairs. Troops that do remain continue to be bombed, as well as face an increased crime rate on behalf of remnants of a healthy insurgency. If Iraq had a chance to be the healthy state that its citizens hoped America could help it become, a different approach was necessary, one free from the influences of special interests.

Most importantly, the reasons for going to war with Iraq should have been intensely scrutinized by not only the public, but also by an unwavering congress free from the emotions of the post-9/11 environment. Our representatives should not be held at gunpoint by patriotic sentiments out of fear for tarnishing their reputations. Instead, the true nature of responsible governing should be rewarded regardless of the implications it has against the majority opinion. In such an environment, those individuals who wish to take advantage of bandwagon pressures for their own benefit will be challenged by vigilant officials eager to prevent national catastrophe. There is no doubt that the world



was made a more safe and secure place by removing Saddam Hussein from power. However, the costs and benefits of launching a foreign war with the intention of rebuilding a country after reducing it to rubble were far underestimated in the face of pressure to respond to September 11<sup>th</sup>. The underlying interests that have been discussed in the previous chapters had little trouble masking their true intentions by using the opportunistic qualities of terrorism to launch a war, the justification for which, if properly inspected, would have proven to be completely unwarranted.

That this did occur represents the uncovering of a larger systemic weakness within our administrative system. What justice can be accomplished in the realm of foreign policy when the true intentions for otherwise unnecessary action are veiled behind a curtain of false evidence? Accountability in American society must be extended beyond the point of what has historically been a natural trust in our nation's leaders. If it has become the capacity of elected officials to regularly bend public opinion to accomplish their own goals that go directly against an otherwise informed civic view, there must be a readjustment of expectations to insure the quality of information we receive from our leaders is satisfactory.

If this had been done in the buildup to war with Iraq, justification for action would not have been found in the existence of weapons of mass destruction, nor a solid relationship between terrorist organizations and Saddam Hussein. Instead, the truth, that Iraq's dictator was a threat to American interests in the Middle East including limiting our access to a vast oil supply and a threat to our allies would have been considered as either enough evidence for preventative measures, or not worth the cost of life and resources. It is most likely the latter opinion that members within the administration

considered to be the majority view of an American public removed from domestic threats, and therefore relied on the fabrication of intelligence to win over others to their side. As much as it is the fault of those who did the fabrication, it is also the fault of those who bought into the false evidence without at least a precursory investigation of facts. Of course with hindsight it is easy to point a finger at American society for falling victim to the clouding effects of traumatic events, but the failure to pick up on being duped into launching a largely unnecessary war is a national issue that must be prevented in future scenarios.

If, in this continuing hypothetical scenario it were decided that the threat of Saddam Hussein was truthfully distinguished to be worth the costs of launching a war, the next step to ensure a successful completion of pre-war goals would be an extensive planning period. Unlike the planning procedures that took place, a successful attempt would have to be highly organized, split amongst a multitude of organizations, and include in its staff a plethora of experts with broad experience in whatever segment of the plan they were working on. The planning that did take place was almost directly opposed to a strategy such as this, with a very limited number of individuals running it, no real direction of purpose, and a highly lopsided bias towards the military operation. Emphasis was taken off the post-war plan due to a collaborative understanding amongst special interests within the administration that establishing a stable Iraq was not necessarily the most important aspect of intervention there. Having established a short timeline for themselves in making a plan, the special interests left post-war policies on the backburner.

Citizens must demand that their leaders promote healthy debate amongst policy makers, and allow the dissent to flourish instead of accepting the current blind allegiance to an administration's policies. Further demands should insure that these leaders are also surrounded by advisors whose opinions are respected not because of an ideological congruency or party allegiance, but for their experience and proven effectiveness. Rumsfeld's insistence on organizing a highly efficient yet understaffed war for the benefit of the media was what cost American forces so dearly after major military operations had ended. By repeatedly cutting the number of troops that he deemed as necessary to pull off a successful invasion against the recommendations of a multitude of experts, Rumsfeld was sealing the fate of thousands of soldiers who would die as a result of an insufficient amount of ground personnel able to deal with a growing insurgency. In addition, by keeping supplies low, armaments and protective technology that could have been saving lives was kept out of the military's plan for the sake of reducing cost as much as possible. What appeared to be saving on the front end, however, turned into excess spending as more troops, supplies, and ultimately lives were required to make up the slack of Rumsfeld's folly.

The lack of troops to stabilize the post-war environment was only one of the many facets of the planning process that contributed to the overall failure of the operation. More generally, the fact that there was no obvious arrangement of what to do after the invasion played a significant role in the breakdown of positive momentum that had arisen through a successful military victory. Specifically, a set chain of command, instructions on how to go about reestablishing essential services to the public, and in what ways democracy should begin to be erected were absent from the desks of those in charge of

implementing orders from above. The day by day chaos that resulted at the hands of Garner, Bremer, Sanchez and other military leaders on the ground could have been avoided by delaying the starting point of the initial invasion, and making time for thorough post-war preparation. Delaying the invasion, however, was out of the question as interest groups were engrossed in a preventive strategy that needed to be implemented as soon as possible to satisfy their multiple goals.

Much like the proposed invasion plan, the process for arranging the events of a successful post-war phase would have to be highly detailed, involving the efforts of experts from organizations such as the Future of Iraq Project whose members had obtained vast experience within Iraq studying its society and who possessed the knowledge necessary to have a great impact on plans for reconstruction. After this recruiting process, plans for what fundamental services would have restoration priority, how to go about restoring them, and by whom, would have been the appropriate next step. Occam's razor could have provided the simplest answer to these quandaries. Namely, the recruitment of domestic companies to repair, construct, and update Iraqi infrastructure. Much like is done in times of emergency on the state level, personnel from different American organizations with knowledge in areas such as fire, electricity, excavation, architecture, engineering, aquatics, etc could have collaborated to solve particular issues. What was preventing the administration from shipping ACME Electrical and Water Experts to Iraq as aids in the struggle to establish essential resources? The answer lies in selfish corporate interests who were awarded contracts based on government connections, then failed to follow through with their assigned tasks. Even as late as 2006 electricity levels were lower than even before the invasion, signaling

a massive failure on behalf of the reconstruction effort to accomplish the simplest of goals. By assigning specific tasks to independent organizations or companies that had little or no political ties and who could be held accountable for any incomplete work, the fundamental needs of Iraqi citizens could have been met quickly and efficiently. As it was executed however, profit incentive overrode the desire to complete the broader objective of reestablishing the infrastructural integrity of Iraq, leaving much-needed resources out of reach and fueling a rumbling insurgency.

The corruption that was apparent in both Iraqi reconstruction and the response to Hurricane Katrina has revealed the toxic condition of this nation's response efforts. To rid ourselves of this, it is not enough to suggest alternative courses of action that would have led to a more successful outcome. In addition, the recognition that this condition is pervasive throughout American society must also be made. Systemically, a nation once responsible for landing on the moon, producing the atomic bomb, and making astounding leaps in the field of medicine is apparently capable of neither turning on the water in a foreign country, nor quickly rescuing its own citizens from the aftermath of an environmental disaster. Blame cannot be placed on one administration, while both events did take place during Bush's presidency, but on American society's inability to prevent a slippage in quality control. As the American bureaucratic system has expanded exponentially, responsibility to ensure its excellence has been largely left up to the individual smaller bureaucracies that it consists of. Such self-regulation has led to a degrading level of value in the processes that a once mighty America was considered more than capable of as individuals within, operate according to their own desires. In order to prevent the further breakdown of our bureaucratic system, we must ensure that

operations carried out by American bureaucracies remain free from the burden of external influence and internally have not coagulated through years of inactivity. As large a task this may seem, it is fundamental to preventing failures such as the operation in Iraq, in the future.

If the proper planning had been done before the invasion not only would action have been put off for a considerable amount of time as a workable plan was formulated, but immediately following a successful invasion, forces would have instantly begun to rebuild, repair, and revive the wellbeing of Iraq. At the forefront, a clear chain of command from the lowliest of ground operatives to the highest positions in the administration should have been determined in order to prevent the organizational fumbling that was characteristic throughout the post-war period. With clear job descriptions, duties, and superiors, American officials could have embarked on the necessary projects to reestablish essential resources, maintain security to prevent the large-scale unrest that took place, and move into position predetermined leaders of the new Iraqi regime based on a popular consensus. Instead, the awkward relationship that existed between the military and civilian reconstruction effort headed up by Paul Bremer generated an unproductive environment where essential projects such as establishing a working electrical grid remained unfinished months after hostilities had ended. In addition, ground commanders had no indication as to who they should report to or what objectives they should be carrying out. Why post-invasion Iraq was a chaotic environment and not a smoothly operating medium for the American reconstruction effort was the clear lack of preparedness, including a deficient chain of command, caused by the pressures of special interests with their own agenda.

Continuing the procession of poor execution after the war were Bremer's two orders as head of the CPA. The first, that of banning Baath party members from the workforce, was a highly miscalculated error of reconstruction that was the first CPA nail in the coffin of a peaceful and revitalized Iraq. By removing such a deep layer of the workforce, the unemployment levels within Iraq skyrocketed as 60% of Iraqis who had previously held jobs were now incapable of returning to work. The anger that resulted was the first ingredient in creating an insurgency that would plague the American effort for the next eight years. Bremer's objective in this order was to strip the remnants of Saddam's regime from the public sphere. However, this goal could have been accomplished much more accurately by closely examining the social relationships involved in Baath party politics. Many of the crucial ministries and institutions of Iraqi society such as those involving the education system and the distribution of resources were disbanded along with the removal of Baath party members. In addition, Chalabi, who was put in charge of purging Baath members, used this opportunity to clear the political realm of those who might threaten his rule.

Accordingly, if a shallower purge had taken place of only those party members with direct links to Saddam and his regime, ministries, schools, and the gears of a functional Iraq could have remained in place, making collaboration between American reconstruction officials and these Iraq institutions a mechanism of efficient revitalization. Much of the slack in progress of reconstruction was on account of a lack of personnel capable of completing specific tasks. If members of these ministries had not been sent home, their roles in the Iraqi government could have been utilized as a means of completing vital objectives immediately after the fall of Baghdad. For many of these

workers, loyalty to a cruel dictator was not a priority, and therefore working for the American reconstruction effort in attempts to inject efficiency back into the Iraqi society would have been a job worth doing. Neglecting this possibility, however, Bremer effectively gutted the ministries, turning could-be collaborators into prey of the insurgency.

Chalabi, a man shrouded in controversy, should also not have been put in charge of the de-Baathification effort or even considered for post-war leadership initially. His troubled past with the CIA should have been a signal to the administration that he was not to be trusted, and his actions removing scores of innocent Baath party members from his rise to the top should have reinforced this. Through the organic work of the ministries working in partnership with American officials, an Iraqi leadership would naturally surface, creating an obvious choice for the transference of power. As it stood, however, there was no such opportunity for Iraqis to rise to the occasion, and frustrated by the lack of options in the face of a supposed liberation, turned against their liberators.

Bremer's second order, disbanding the military, was a clear attempt to rid the country of the previous regime's fighting forces as a threat to the American presence, and for the neocon special interest, the threat to Israel. As legitimate a motivation this would seem, knowledge of the Iraqi military would reveal a less than favorable relationship between military leaders and Saddam who remained physically separated out of the latter's fear of rebellion. A majority of the army, therefore, had no intention of carrying out Saddam's will after he was removed from power, and instead remained as a malleable force with the potential to aid in the reconstruction effort. Tasks such as basic security, street cleaning, and the removal of Saddam loyalists could have been carried out by the



capable hands of trained Iraqi soldiers. This would have taken much responsibility off the shoulders of American administrators, and allowed Iraqis to have a hand in the restoration of their own country. By actively participating in reconstruction, thousands of soldiers would have been engaged in productive efforts, employed, and with no reason rebel against American forces. As Bremer ordered however, the entire military was broken up and sent home with the training and weapons that it had used over the course of a long and bloody career. As the country's stability began to deteriorate, ex-soldiers were able to release their frustrations about the state of their living conditions by violently engaging the American presence that they saw as the cause of their anguish. The resulting insurgency cost the lives of thousands of American soldiers, all while being completely preventable.

Because of his two orders, Bremer made it appear necessary to turn the American presence in Iraq into an occupation. It could have easily been a nation-building role with limited interruption in Iraqi life as a locally staffed effort rebuilt the country with the aid of American officials. Nevertheless more and more military personnel were needed to combat the growing insurgency whose goal it was to expel a foreign occupier that was acting more like a parasite than an aid. As private companies swooped into neighborhoods in order to make money off the destruction that had taken place, Iraqi citizens were helpless to take part in their own revival. Much of what was being done had no real effect on the improvement of their lives as essential services still remained absent years after the invasion, and armed Americans continued to interrupt Iraqi daily life. Oil fields damaged through years of war remained in disrepair, leaving a rich resource of reconstruction capital untapped below the earth's surface. Funds from the sale of this oil

could have taken the place of the billions of American dollars flowing into reconstruction projects, and again would have given Iraqis an opportunity to partake in their own revitalization.

If these steps had been followed, an atmosphere would have been created allowing for intense concentration on fabricating a new Iraqi government. Such a government would have to be particularly sensitive to the wide variety of ethnic and religious sects that comprise the socio-demographic landscape of the country, as well as the American commitment to a free and fair democracy. Major choices such as whether to make the country a secular state, voting district lines, and constitutional format should have been the first to be made, and perhaps even some of them ahead of the invasion. This would have cut down on time needed to establish forward momentum in erecting a functional government. This is also the one stage that should have required the most Iraqi involvement. Citizen's votes, leader's contributions, and general societal investment in aiding the assembly of governing body should have been held as the highest priority.

Bremer, however, plowed ahead without much attention to this seemingly vital aspect of the reconstruction process. In creating the Iraqi Governing Council, he provided the appearance of Iraqi involvement in political realm, but the body had very little power in Iraqi affairs. As its president, Chalabi continued the untrustworthy behavior that the CIA had come to expect from the diplomat, further slowing any chances for a democratization process. More recently, Chalabi has been accused of attempting to bring back his position as head of de-Baathification, charged with banning 500 names from the ballots of the general election on March 7, 2010 (Sly, <http://articles.latimes.com/2010/feb/28/world/la-fg-iraq-chalabi28-2010feb28>). Such

behavior was made possible by special interests that planned to use Chalabi as their answer to the question of post-war leadership.

As the occupation continued, however, the worsening security situation hampered attempts to move political progress forward. Disgruntled Iraqis mutated into insurgents, taking up arms with their peers to fend off the invaders themselves. Realizing the failure of the Governing Council to jumpstart the creation of a stable government, power was transferred in June of 2004 to the Iraqi Interim Government, which was eventually replaced by the Iraqi Transitional Government after a National Assembly election in January of 2005. Over a year later, the first official post-war government under Al Maliki took office, signaling at least on the surface the completion of the American effort to establish democracy in Iraq. Underneath the façade of elections and popular supported leaders was the truth that Iraq's security level and standard of living conditions were unacceptable to be used as metrics in exemplifying Iraq as a successfully revived state. The four permanent American military bases that remain in Iraq are a constant reminder that foreign presence is a new feature of life for citizens of the country. Although officially American intervention there has ended, never again will there be an Iraq without American influence.

Iraq today is much the same country it was eight years ago with the exception of having a ruthless dictator at the helm of its government. The long and expensive escapade that America set upon to remove Saddam cost the lives of over four thousand American soldiers, almost one thousand private contractors, over one hundred thousand Iraqi civilian deaths, billions of dollars, and the reputation of American preeminence. Unlike episodes of the past such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, our inability to change Iraq into a

rejuvenated Middle Eastern democracy is entirely derived from the nature of the special interests that pushed us to war in the aftermath of a terrible national disaster. While these interests may have been satisfied, it was at the expense of not only the costs listed above, but also a precedent that has made validating the legitimacy of foreign policy a new civic duty beyond the historical trust of government officials. The dynamics of American politics have forever been altered by the events of this war.

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